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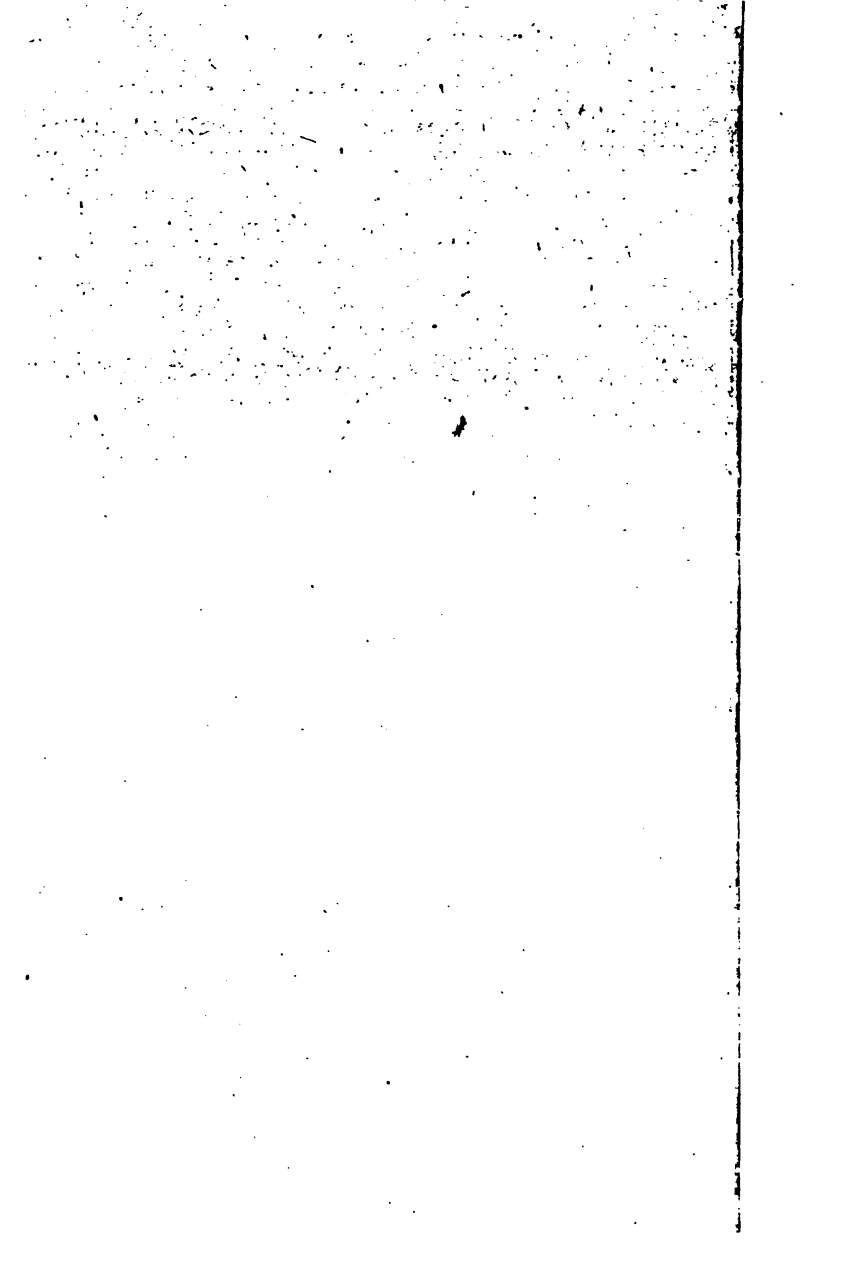


Ed  
Oct 2

Thos Mc Millan Esqr

Greenock

) With the Author's complines



“ HISTORICAL SKETCHES  
OF THE  
Town & Harbours of Greenock, ”

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BY  
DUGALD CAMPBELL,

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VOLUME I.

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*Reprinted from the "Greenock Telegraph."*

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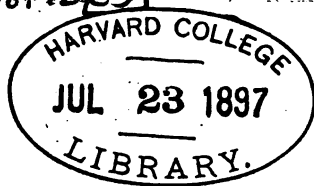


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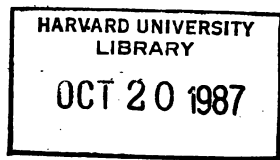
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## PREFACE.

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THE following sketches were originally contributed to the *Greenock Telegraph* under the title of "Our Harbours." They were begun in anticipation of the cutting of the first sod of the James Watt Dock, with the intention of giving some information respecting the origin and date of erection of the various Piers and Harbours belonging to the town, but have gradually been extended so as to embrace a much wider range of subjects, bearing on the early history of the burgh.

The interest taken in these articles by all classes of the community, and the repeated requests that have been made for their publication in a more permanent form than that of newspaper articles, has led to their being reprinted in this fashion.

Should inaccuracies of any kind have crept into the volume through inadvertence, the

fact that the articles were got up hurriedly for a newspaper will, we trust, be a sufficient apology for the same.

Probably, as leisure affords, other contributions bearing on the History of the Town may be made from time to time ; and the whole may ultimately take the form of a systematic History of Greenock ; but no such pretensions accompany the issue of this little volume.





## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE I.

Considering the important extension of the harbours to be made by the addition of the Wet Dock at Garvel Park, it may not be inopportune to contemplate the gradual rise of Greenock as a shipping port, and take note of how great works, as well as great events, from small beginnings rise. We propose, therefore, as occasion and space may permit, to state some particulars connected with the beginning and enlargement of the harbours, and the rise and progress of the trade of the town.

Before 1635 Greenock was only known as one of the parishes in the county of Renfrew, the inhabitants of which consisted of a few farmers and some fisher folk, who had built a row of houses near the beach for convenience in carrying on their occupation. In 1635, however, the Laird of Greenock, plain John Schaw, received a charter from Charles the First, as acting for his son the Baron of Renfrew, conferring upon Greenock the right

and privileges of a Burgh of Barony. We thus designate the Laird, because the honour of Baronetcy had not then been granted, the first Baronet being his son, who received the honour of knighthood from Charles the Second for services rendered at the battle of Worcester. This charter, which was confirmed by the Scots Parliament in 1641, gave the burgh of Greenock for the first time a local habitation and a name. It was granted in favour of John Schaw and Helen Houstoun, his spouse. Following on this charter a Baron Bailie was appointed, who held courts for the purpose of settling all disputes among the inhabitants and seeing generally to the wellbeing of the community. The laird seems to have been a long-headed, energetic man, most desirous of improving his estate; and to encourage such of the fisher folk as might be of saving, industrious habits to settle in the burgh he gave off feus at a moderate rate.

For the further accommodation of the fisher folk, and to make Greenock the chief place of departure for the passage boats to Ireland, and for securing whatever trade existed to the Western Isles, he, with the assistance of his feuars and tenants, built a stone pier of some extent. It was built without mortar on the dry stone dyke principle, heavy stones forming the breasts all round, with

smaller stones in the centre. It seems to have been something like what the quay at Ardrishaig was before the improvement made by the Messrs Hutcheson, and not by any means so large or substantial as the present quay at Gourrock. We have no local record of that period giving any description of it, but during the Protectorate, when Oliver Cromwell was in power, he deputed one of the Customs officials to visit the various ports on the Clyde, and report to the Commissioners of Customs as to their revenues. This gentleman, whose name was Thomas Tucker, reported on Glasgow, Dumbarton, Renfrew, and went on to Port-Glasgow, then called Newark, "which," he says, "is a small place, where, besides the Laird's house, there are four or five houses, and before them a pretty good road, where the vessels do ride, unlade, and send their goods up to Glasgow in small boats. There is one landing wailer at this place. The next place is Greenock (including Cartsydyke), which is such another as Newark, only the inhabitants are more, but all seamen or fishermen, trading for Ireland or the Isles in open boats, at which place there is a mole or pier where vessels might ride or shelter in stress of weather; and here there is another Customs landing wailer."

Although the Glasgow merchants gave the preference to Newark as the port where ves-

sels should unlade for transhipment in boats to Glasgow, yet Greenock seems to have had a fair share of this trade, as many of the foreign-going vessels found it difficult to beat up to Newark—there was no steam in those days—owing to the narrowness of the channel, especially at the throughlet at Garvel Point. A strong-easterly gale was in as high repute among the fishermen of Greenock in those days as it is among shipowners now when they have ships ready to sail, although for a contrary reason, as it generally ensured stoppage of the foreign vessels there to discharge instead of going on to Port-Glasgow; while, for the same reason, an east wind was the *bete noir* of that town, as it added to the difficulty of beating up the channel, which was then shallower than it is now. To-day the channelway is as much a burning question between Greenock and the Upper Ports on the river as it was with Newark in 1650.

Cromwell's Commissioner visited the town in 1656, and in 1670 it was visited by a French traveller (M. Jorevin de Rocheford) who gives a somewhat similar account of it. "Krinock," as he so spells it—Kilmalcolm he spells "Kimmacoom"—he says is "the town where the Scotch post and packet boat starts to Ireland. Its port is good, sheltered by the

mountains which surround it, and by a mole, by the side of which are ranged the barks and other vessels loading and unloading." This is very similar to the description of it by Tucker; and as they both saw it personally, we are inclined to give a preference to their account over that of the historian of Renfrewshire who, writing considerably later, says it was a rude landing place, unfit for the reception of vessels. Possibly the former saw it in the summer—the most likely time for visitors to such an outlandish place as it then was—and the mole might then be in a bustle with the boats landing herrings or goods for re-shipment to Glasgow; but in the winter time, we doubt not, it would form no great protection, and be little more than a rude landing place.

The charter of 1635, although a considerable step in advance, did not accomplish all the Laird or his people desired, as, while giving liberty to hold fairs, and to trade in home-made stuffs and commodities, it expressly excluded foreign trade, which was the privilege of the Royal Burghs alone. Limited as it was, it excited the jealousy of Renfrew, and John Spreule, the representative of that burgh in the Scots Parliament, protested that "the charter to Greenock was to be in no ways prejudicial to our antient privileges contained in our infest-



ment as accords of law." To have vessels come into Renfrew harbour with cargoes from foreign ports for traders in Glasgow and the other Royal Burghs, while the inhabitants of Greenock were altogether prohibited from such trade, must have been very galling to the latter ; but there was no help for it except by getting a new charter, as the penalty of unfree burghs or individuals engaging in foreign trade was deprivation of their charters and forfeiture of their estate and goods, in addition to the vessel and cargo seized, the one-half of which went to the King and the other half to the Royal Burghs. Every effort was therefore made by Mr Shaw to secure the privilege of foreign trade, but, as the Royal Burghs were watchful, and opposed every attempt, he was long unsuccessful. In 1670, however, owing, it is believed, to the services rendered to the King by his son, the first baronet, he received a new charter, giving, among other things, the privilege of buying and selling wine, wax, salt, brandy, pitch tar, and other goods and merchandise. This charter was not confirmed by the Scots Parliament until the year 1681 ; and in the interval, as the Laird had begun to exercise the rights given under the charter, he speedily came into collision with the Royal Burghs, who seized a vessel belonging to Greenock with foreign goods on board, and carried her

off to Port-Glasgow. This the people of Greenock resented, and to the number of 100 men, under the command of the Laird and Mr Bannatyne, the laird of Kelly, who was also interested in the venture on board the vessel seized, went in boats to Port-Glasgow (there was no road to Port-Glasgow at this time, the wood growing close to the seashore) to recapture her if possible. Likely anticipating an attack, the capturers of the vessel had a large number of men on board armed with cutlasses and other weapons, and notwithstanding the bravery exhibited by the attacking party they were beaten off, but not before many were severely wounded on both sides. The matter was brought by a complaint of the Royal Burghs situated on the Clyde—Glasgow, Dumbarton, and Renfrew—before the Lords of Secret Council. The complaint was as follows, viz.:—That the town of Greenock being a burgh of barony lying upon Clydeside, in which the said town and particularly the town of Glasgow are infeft in the haill harbours, creeks, roads, and ports from Kelvin foot to the Cloch stone [there was no lighthouse then at the Cloch, a large stone painted white serving the purpose]; that notwithstanding the charter in favor of the foresaid Royal Burghs giving them the sole right to carry on foreign trade, the people of Greenock had imported wine,

salt, brandy, and other foreign commodities, in breach of their charter, and had frequently landed same at night before they could be detected; that, as from information received, this practice was becoming more frequent, the said Royal Burghs, for the protection of their rights and privileges, had a watch set, and hearing a vessel had come in to discharge wine and brandy, they sent a body of men to seize her, which they did, having found the report to be true. The vessel being thus caught in the act of breaking the law, they carried her to Newark, there to have her forfeited as is usual—one half to the King and the other half to the burghs. The said burghs have further to complain that while the said vessel was lying at Newark, and on the night following that on which she was seized, the Laird of Greenock and the Laird of Kelly, accompanied by about 100 men, attacked those in charge of the said vessel, and attempted to retake her, and that they had only been driven off with great difficulty, and after they had inflicted considerable injury on those in charge of the said vessel. They conclude by asking that the penalties be exacted as accords with law for carrying on foreign trade, the said town of Greenock not being a Royal Burgh. The complaint came duly before the Lords of Secret Council, but their decision is not

recorded. It is generally believed, however, that the charter of 1670 being in existence, although not yet confirmed by Parliament, saved the Laird and his associates from the penalties attached to trading foreign without a charter, and that Greenock became bound by the decision to pay a certain amount of annual cess to the Royal Burghs for being allowed henceforth to carry on foreign trade, of which by their charters the Royal Burghs had hitherto a monopoly. This cess, which was only a few shillings at the first—as will be seen in a subsequent article—was to increase in proportion to the number and size of the vessels engaged in the trade, and now amounts to about £75 per annum.

It may be stated that the Royal Burghs are about to have a Bill introduced to Parliament, giving Greenock and other Parliamentary Burghs paying cess representation on the same footing as themselves. This we consider important, as the Convention of Burghs will, no doubt, yet prove a considerable factor in connection with all local measures.





## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE II.

The Charter of 1670, when confirmed by the Scots Parliament in 1681, gave Greenock liberty of foreign trade, but under the condition, as already stated, of paying a certain cess to the Royal Burghs for that privilege. This cess was called the "unfreetrade cess," and was to be paid according to the number and tonnage of vessels belonging to the port trading to foreign ports. In fixing the amount to be paid there arose a dispute between Sir John as acting for the town and the Commissioners for the Royal Burghs, and a neutral person was therefore appointed as Commissioner to make inquiry as to the number of vessels, and to fix the amount to be paid on their account. This inquiry brought out the fact that at that date only one ship, called the John, was wholly owned in Greenock, and that other three, the George, Neptune, and Hendrie, were owned partly in Greenock and partly elsewhere. The first witness examined was the Baron Bailie, a

Mr Allan Spiers, who deponed that there was one ship belonging to Greenock called the John, that there was another called the Neptune which belonged partly to Greenock and partly to Cartdyke, he could not say in what proportions; also, that there were two others belonging partly to Greenock and partly to Glasgow called the George and the Hendrie, but he could not tell in what proportions. Further, that there was one barque belonging to William Rowand and another barque to William Johnston, and a traveller boat to James Rankin. These were all Bailie Spiers knew to be owned or partly owned except the fishing boats, which were not included in the inquiry. Alexander Mitchell, a merchant in Greenock, confirmed this evidence, and the Commissioner then fixed the cess about eight shillings Scots, which, as already stated, has now increased to about £75 per annum.

The imposition of this cess was for many years a vexed question in Greenock, more probably, however, from the mode of collecting it than from its amount, and in the year 1760 was the occasion of much bitterness. The disagreement was caused by the refusal of some of the inhabitants to pay their share of the cess, and especially one Archd. Turner, shoemaker, who seems to have been the chief

offender. In consequence of this military were brought to town, and quartered on the recusant inhabitants until they made up their minds to pay. Turner, however, continued to refuse, and said he "would rather be killed than pay." The trades, who sympathised generally with Turner, and who were especially indignant at the quartering of the military on the inhabitants for such a reason, held a meeting, and sent a deputation to remonstrate with the authorities. The spokesman for the deputation appears to have been one James Chalmers, a weaver. He solicited an interview with one of the magistrates, who was also the Baron Bailie, Mr Hugh Crawford, and, as that gentleman afterwards stated to the Sheriff, he, the said James Chalmers, there and then disputed and quarrelled the right of quartering the military on the town for the deficiency of the unfree trade money, and said that if the said Archibald Turner was not relieved from quartering "he would raise the four trades of weavers, coopers, tailors, and shoemakers in arms against the authorities and the military." Although it was explained to him and his colleagues that the proceedings to which objection was taken were ordered by Mr Forbes, collector at Edinburgh for the Royal Burghs. and his Excellency the Lieutenant-General, Lord George Beauclerc, he the said James

Chalmers would not listen to reason, but swore he would put his threat into execution. Following on this information the Sheriff granted warrant for Chalmers' apprehension, and to save himself he had to leave the town. Although for the time this high-handed procedure resulted in success, yet the strong feeling it excited among the people prevented such a mode of recovering the cess from ever being attempted again in Greenock.

But to return to the year 1670, we find that in that year a company was started for curing herrings, and that his Majesty Charles the Second took a considerable amount of stock in it. The King thus became a herring-curer, and the company, owing to his connection with it, called themselves the Royal Company. Whether owing to the King's friendship for the young laird, who, as has been stated, was knighted by him, or because the old laird was one of the promoters, is not known, but the company selected Greenock as one of the chief emporiums for carrying on their trade. They took ground and built large cellars fronting what is now Bogle and Rue-end Streets, where Ewing's Buildings stand, and which was in consequence called the Royal Closs. There they kept the salt for curing purposes, and stored the herrings until opportunities were presented for exportation. The com-



pany continued to thrive for many years until, through the exertions of other companies, the charter—which conditioned that none but this company were to cure herrings before the 20th September—was withdrawn, as being too great a restraint upon others in the same trade. In consequence of the withdrawal of the charter the company was dissolved, and the Royal Closs and cellars were sold by public roup, and purchased by the Magistrates and Town Council of the city of Glasgow, by whom they were long used as tobacco warehouses. They were held by that Corporation until the present century, when they were sold to Mr Ewing and others. While the company existed they carried on a large export trade to foreign markets. In the year 1674—which seems, however, to have been an exceptionally good year—they sent 20,400 barrels to the French port of Rochelle alone, besides what was sent to other ports of France, and to Sweden, Dantzic, and other places on the Baltic.

At that time the Clyde and its lochs were a great resort of the herring, no fewer than 300 boats being employed in the season in that fishery. Greenock in those days had for its motto the very appropriate one "Let herrings swim that trade maintain." The herring trade was then the staple one, and many families rose

to position and opulence by it. It is worthy of observation that the herrings which were caught in the Clyde were larger, firmer, and of a better taste and took better with the salt than any caught elsewhere, and Clyde herrings were then prized both at home and abroad very much as Lochfyne herrings are in our own day. Besides herring, we find from an old list that there were not fewer than fifty-seven different kinds of fish then caught in the Clyde at Greenock, including pellocks or porpoises, salmon, sea trout, cod, haddocks, whittings, gudgeons, sturgeons, and others of the piscatorial genus. The seal, too, was a frequent visitor, and could be found in almost any season along the shore between Greenock and Gourrock and the sandbanks in the neighbourhood. The demand for other fish than the herring does not seem to have been so great as to form an element in the rise of the port, although occasionally a good many salmon were caught. The harbour was chiefly used by the herring boats, but occasionally vessels brought in cargoes of grain and sometimes timber from the Baltic ports in return for the herrings. For the grain cargoes discharged at Greenock, it was found needful to have stores—cellars they were called in those days—and Sir John seems to have granted feus at a moderate rate to encourage their erection.

In 1686 the first vessel from 'Greenock crossed the Atlantic. She was called the George (probably the vessel of that name already referred to), and was commanded by a Captain Gibson. In addition to her cargo she had twenty-two prisoners who had been sentenced at Edinburgh to transportation to Carolina for attending conventicles and being disaffected to the Government. Greenock, so far as can be traced, seems to have suffered but little from the persecution carried on throughout the country at this date; probably the old connection between King Charles and the Baronet, who had now succeeded to the estate, his father having died in 1679, may have prevented any suspicion attaching to him or his people. But these were the "killing times," and the cruelties perpetrated on the people of Scotland by those monsters in human shape who were the minions of the Government are almost inconceivable. That "oppression which maketh wise men mad" was in the fullest swing during the latter years of Charles the Second and during the fortunately short reign of his successor James the Seventh. To have signed the covenant or to have attended a field meeting to hear the gospel from an outed minister, or to have expounded the Scriptures, or been present in a private house where they were expounded, when

more than five persons were there in addition to the family, were all offences punishable by death and confiscation of goods. The bloody Mackenzie, Claverhouse, Dalziel, and Grierson of Lagg, backed by a ruthless soldiery, had then the lives and liberties of the people at their mercy, and sadly they used or rather abused their power. Even women did not escape. Isabel Allison of Perth and Marion Harvey of Borrowstouness were hanged at Edinburgh for attending the preaching of Donald Cargill and refusing to take the oath. In 1685 two women—Margaret M'Lachlan, an aged widow, and Margaret Wilson, a young woman of 18—were tied to stakes in the Solway near Wigton and drowned because they refused to take the oath of abjuration and attend the episcopal meetings. The same year Claverhouse shot John Brown of Priesthill with his own hand when his soldiers were humane enough to refuse to do it, Brown's offence being that he did not attend the public worship of the Episcopalians, and that he prayed at conventicles. After shooting Brown the murderer turned to his wife and asked what she thought of her husband now. "I ever thought meikle of him," she replied, "and I think more of him now than ever; but how will you answer for this morning's work?" she asked. "To man I can be answerable," said

the bloodthirsty ruffian, "and as for God I will take Him in my own hands." These are given as an example of the outrages perpetrated by a tyrannical Government, which drove Argyle and the best of the land into rebellion, and were only brought to an end by the "glorious revolution" of 1688. The 22 persons shipped at Greenock for Carolina in the George had been tried for nonconformity and similar offences to those stated above, and sentenced to transportation to the plantations for the whole period of their mortal lives. As showing how the sympathies of the people went—although, as we have stated, there is no record of their having suffered much in the persecuting times—when the George returned it became current that the captain had kept the prisoners in irons and ill-treated and abused them badly during the voyage. On his landing at Greenock the people manifested their disgust at such conduct by mobbing and hooting him, and he was speedily compelled to take refuge in his vessel, then lying in the roads. The population of Greenock, including Cartsdyke, is estimated to have been about 1,200 at the end of the 17th century.

Cartsdyke, which had been made a burgh of Barony in 1636, was greatly in repute at that time (1686) for its red herring. Mr John Spreule, a merchant in Glasgow, and after-

wards author of the accompt current between England and Scotland, having a considerable establishment there for carrying on that department of the herring trade. About ten years later, in 1696, one of the ships was fitted out here for the Darien expedition. In an account of that expedition Cartsydyke is designated as the Bay of St Lawrence, on the Clyde. It is needless to prognosticate now what the results of that expedition might have been had the Scotch emigrants got fairplay. Possibly a canal would ere this have been made to the Pacific, and the key of the position in the hands of our own countrymen. But instead of receiving help and encouragement from the King (Dutch William) as they were promised, the settlers were shamefully treated, and absolutely starved, the jealousy of the English and Dutch merchants overbearing the influence of Scotland with the Government, and inducing them to adopt a dog-in-the-manger policy, which would neither do anything for the settlers themselves nor allow their countrymen to furnish them with supplies and assistance. The story is an old one now, but the disastrous issue of the scheme and the main cause of it entered like iron into the soul of the Scottish nation, and almost blasted the negotiations for union, then being carried on.

Notwithstanding the unsettled state of the country generally, the shipping trade of Greenock continued to increase, and the town kept steady pace with it. Between 1670 and 1700 the necessity of harbour extension largely exercised the minds of Mr Shaw and his son. Three times they approached Parliament in that period asking for assistance to build harbours and power to levy dues for paying same, but were always unsuccessful. This was mainly owing to the opposition of the Royal Burghs through their representatives in the Scots Parliament, the other Royal Burghs making common cause with Glasgow and Renfrew against this young intruder on their ancient privileges.





## OUR HARBOURS.

### ARTICLE III.

We stated in our last that the population of Greenock in the end of the 17th century was estimated about 1,200. Since then we have ascertained that the proper number was 1,328, divided thus :—

Greenock Burghal and Landward,	1,073
Cartsdyke do. do.,	255

In all, . . . . . 1,328

This enumeration is given in the Poll Tax Book for Renfrewshire made up in the reign of William and Mary shortly after the Revolution, a copy of which was published by a Glasgow contemporary some years ago. This poll tax was imposed "for the purpose of raising the necessary funds to provide ships of war and maintain seamen for defence of the coasts, with a suitable number of land forces," and the roll made up in connection therewith may therefore be relied on as pretty correct. The instructions for making it up bear that the name of each member of every family was



to be given, distinguishing between those below and those over sixteen years of age, that being the age at which persons became liable for the tax. All servants, cottars, and lodgers, whose regular location was in Greenock, were to be included, but fisher folks from other places, who only visited the town for a month or two during the fishing season, were not to be enrolled here but in their respective parishes. It seems that at this date (1695) many of the fishermen resorting to the harbour were from Saltcoats, Ayr, and Irvine, as well as Argyleshire, and they were ordered to make sure on their return home that they were duly enrolled in the books of their shire, according to law. Another class who were not to be included in the Greenock roll were the merchants and others from Glasgow who resorted thither in the summer season—that is, no doubt, the “saut water visitors.” Strange as it now appears to think of our good burgh as the resort of the fashionable valedudinarians of ancient St Mungo’s, yet so it was, and they too were obliged to go to their own city to be taxed, as a certain illustrious pair were in another land sixteen hundred and ninety-five years before in the days of Cæsar Augustus.

When we consider the beauty of Greenock at that period, however, all that wonder

vanishes. Situated on a lovely bay with a fine gravelly beach, while behind, the lower range of hills—what is now Shaw Place, Regent Street, and the neighbourhood—was well covered with wood down to the bottom of the slope, the town must have presented an exceedingly fine prospect, entitling it to rank as the first among watering-places. Some years later, after the natural beauty had been to some extent injured by the building of the harbour, a stranger visiting the town wrote of its beauty as quite equal to that of Vabro, one of the sweetest spots for situation and scenery to be found in Italy. The only recorded drawback to a state bordering on perfection was one which has, we fear, been common enough since the beginning of human history, namely, the “vaging and clashing of women at the quay-head” (what might we not have escaped but for Mother Eve’s clash with Diabolus) and the “frequenting of taverns and alehouses by the men to the scandal and dispeace of the town.” Things which we might count drawbacks to a watering-place were thought nothing of then. The drying of the herring nets, the fishy odour at the landing place, and an occasional sniff of the fumes of Mr John Spreule’s manufactory of red herring (real Glasgow magistrates) across the Ling Burn, was considered no detriment to the

eyes and noses of a race whose fortunes were so largely bound up with the staple trade of this rising burgh. Many of the Glasgow visitors would, no doubt, themselves be interested in this important business, and would count the odour and other accessories flowing from a heavy take of herrings as pleasant and delicious as the most fragrant perfume from "Araby the blest." It may be stated that the Ling Burn referred to is now Dellingburn. In those days it was an open burn with a bridge composed of two old rudders of fishing smacks bolted together. Now it is all arched over, and forms part of Dellingburn Square and Rue-end Street.

We cannot leave the seventeenth century without stating a fact which is somewhat creditable to the seafaring population of the town. The Parish Kirk (what is now known as the Old West Kirk) had been built in 1591 by the Laird of Greenock, and owing to the increase of population it was, a century later, much too small. The Greenock estate having borne all the expense when it was built, the Laird, no doubt, thought that Cartsburn should do his share in now providing the needed accommodation. That gentleman does not seem to have been willing to do this at the time, although, some years afterwards, he did make an addition. The rapid increase in the shipping trade and the rising importance of the place since it

obtained liberty of foreign trade had brought many "godly men accustomed to a seafaring life" to settle in the town. As already stated, a large proportion of these came from the Ayrshire and other Lowland fishing districts—men of exemplary character, who had been brought up to "fear God and observe the Sabbath." It may be here remarked that the influx of people from the Highlands had then scarcely begun. Looking at the names in the poll-tax roll, it is evident that they are mainly Lowland, with here and there a sprinkling from Cowal, such as Campbell, Black, and Lamont. It was not until after the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, and the changes arising from their suppression, that the Highlanders began to arrive in such numbers that one might go from Cartsdyke to the Kirk Burn (now the West Burn) and not hear anything spoken but Gaelic. These seafaring men who had thus settled in the town could not be accommodated with seats in the kirk, and as there was seemingly a difficulty in getting the heritors to move, the masters and mates of some of the vessels and herring bushes held a meeting, at which they agreed to send in a petition to the minister, the kirk-session and heritors to the effect that, if they were allowed to build a loft in the kirk for the accommodation of themselves and the seafaring part of

the population generally, they would defray the whole cost thereof. This petition was duly presented and considered, and on the 9th December, 1697, the petitioners received a reply stating that they would have liberty to build a loft on the south aisle of the kirk, to be called the "sailors' loft," provided it was done entirely at their own expense. The kirk-session further recommended that when the work was completed a box for receiving collections for the poor belonging to seamen be placed at the door of the loft, and Messrs Kelso and Rowan were appointed to correspond with the petitioners as to this. In accordance with their promise they built a loft at their own expense, which was afterwards known as the sailors' loft, and some of our readers have no doubt sat in it in their youthful days, and gazed with admiration on the ship which hung suspended over the same, that Jack might make no mistake when entering the church as to his proper latitude. It reflects no small honour on these worthy men that they should have come forward voluntarily to provide the needed accommodation when those on whom the law placed the burden failed to do so. From this example it would seem that there were Voluntaries even before the French Revolution, although some reverend fathers in our

day hold up Voluntaryism as an emanation from that tragic epoch, to the intense alarm of unsophisticated Highlandmen.

On the first day of March in the closing year of the seventeenth century, the usually quiet town seemed quite in a bustle. At the Mansion House and the Quayhead flags floated in the breeze, and such vessels in the bay or road as had any bunting to display were decorated with it. The kirk bell tolled merrily, and bundles of faggots could be seen gathered here and there ready to set in a blaze whenever the shades of evening had conquered the light of day. Men and women dressed in their brows were gathered in groups discussing with evident excitement and humour some important question, while little boys and girls were running about in all directions cheering and hallooing with all their might. If one inquired what all the stir was about, he would be told that on that day the young laird was being married at Edinburgh to Mistress Margaret Dalrymple, eldest daughter of Sir Hew Dalrymple, Lord President of the Session. Leaving the good people of Greenock to enjoy themselves, and burn their bonfires on that gala day, let us take a glance at what was doing at the bridal party in Edinburgh. The younger Shaw who was now getting married was afterwards the Sir John who did so much for

the harbours and town of Greenock, and it may not therefore be out of place to give an idea of the interesting ceremony which took place when he (nautically speaking, as a chronicler of harbour events ought to do) got moored to the said Mistress Margaret Dalrymple, afterwards the good Lady Shaw who had so much to do with the advancement of the town.

The marriage was in the President's house at Edinburgh, and there were present a great array of the rank and the beauty of the country. Besides the mother of the bridegroom (old Sir John the father was unwell at the time) and the parents of the bride, there were the Earl of Marchmont, Lord High Chancellor of Scotland, the Duke of Hamilton, seven earls, one viscount, five lords, fifteen baronets, and twenty-six gentlemen, and their partners. The bride's favours were all sewed on her gown from top to bottom and round the neck and sleeves. The moment the ceremony was performed the whole company ran to her and pulled off the favours. The next ceremony was the garter, which the bridegroom's man attempted to pull from her leg, but she dropt it through her petticoat on the floor. This was a white and silver ribbon, which was cut in small pieces, each of the company getting a piece. The bride's mother then came in with a basket

of favours belonging to the bridegroom, which were also distributed. The bride's favours were pink and white, and his were blue and gold colour. All the company dined and supped together, and, besides the other liquors, there was not less than a hogshead of claret drank that night. On the following Sabbath a great company went from the President's house to church to see the young couple duly "kirked." The feasting continued every day, till they had gone through all the friends of both families, with a ball every night. Such was the auspicious event which set Greenock to flying flags and kindling bonfires, and generally put everything topsy-turvy for two or three days in March, 1697.







## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE IV.

On coming to Greenock after his marriage, John Shaw, Yr., resolved to apply to Parliament once more for assistance to enlarge the harbour, possibly hoping that the influence of his father-in-law, the Lord President, might be of service. This application was backed up by an urgent petition from the inhabitants, showing how much a harbour was needed for the increased trade of the port ; but notwithstanding every effort the request was again refused. Having failed to get the help of Parliament, he now determined to try another plan to accomplish his purpose. Shortly, therefore, after his father's death in 1702, he asked the feuars, whose numbers had considerably increased since the first feu was taken from his great-grand-father at the Broomy Brae in 1636 (the tanwork and other houses in Harvey Lane now occupy the site of the Broomy Brae) to meet him, and along with them some of the principal merchants and inhabitants, and unfolded to them a

scheme for building a harbour at their own hand without further troubling Parliament. His proposition was that a harbour or harbours should be formed by building quays enclosing the bay from near the Kirk Burn on the west to the Shallows on the east, with another quay running out in the centre, dividing it nearly into two. The plan was very much what was afterwards carried out, and as indeed the harbours now are, only instead of being square the east and west quays were of a circular form, the entrance being opposite to the Mid Quay. The shallows referred to were caused by sandbanks which existed where the Steamboat Quay now stands. The Customhouse was afterwards built on the largest of these banks, but in those days there was a somewhat deep channel formed at high water between it and another bank or spit which extended out from the beach where Palmerston Buildings are now erected. The whole ground to be enclosed was 8 acres 3 roods 10 falls. Such was Sir John's proposal, and it must have appeared no small undertaking in those days. To provide the necessary funds, he further suggested that the feuars should undertake for themselves and their tenants and cottars that all the malt to be brewed into ale should be ground at the Mill of Greenock, which stood on the line of the

West Burn, and that they should pay for same at the rate of one shilling and four pence over and above the ordinary multure per sack, and in addition that they should raise a further sum of £15 yearly, the total amount to be applied towards the erection of the new harbour. If they agreed to this, Sir John promised on his part to pay all the dues received from foreign anchorage (dues received from foreign vessels anchoring in the bay) into the harbour fund, reserving only to himself the anchorage of the ships, boats, and barques belonging to the town. He also promised to advance the money to pay for the work as it proceeded. After several interviews and duly considering the whole question, the feuars approved of the scheme, but stipulated that while the Baron Bailie was to be the treasurer of the fund, a certain number of themselves were to act as managers along with him to see to the application thereof. To this Sir John assented, and a regular contract was drawn out and signed by the respective parties in 1703.

Although the arrangement was completed in 1703 the work does not appear to have begun until two or three years later, Sir John evidently desiring to have some funds accumulated from the tax, and to see how the inhabitants were likely to implement their part of the agreement before

he launched into heavy responsibilities. In 1707, however, the work commenced in earnest, gardeners and masons being brought from Edinburgh to carry on the excavation of the harbour and the building of the quays simultaneously. Odd as it may seem, the gardeners were the only persons thought to be capable of digging harbours in those days, and even on to the middle of last century they were brought from Edinburgh as occasion required to deepen and improve the Greenock harbours. If the Harbour Trustees of to-day were obliged to employ gardeners for digging out the new Wet Dock or James Watt Dock, as some propose to call it, instead of five fifty years would not see it completed. Before 1700 it must have been even a more tedious business than it was seven years later, as it was only in that year wheelbarrows came into use. They had handbarrows of a box construction previously, which needed two men to carry, and even with two men the work of one at the present day could not be executed half so expeditiously.

Up, indeed, till the beginning of the eighteenth century, wheeled vehicles of any kind were scarcely ever used in Renfrewshire, or, in fact, anywhere throughout Scotland, save perhaps Edinburgh and Glasgow, the roads being wretchedly bad

and unfit for carriage traffic. Sir John and Lady Shaw, when visiting Edinburgh, travelled on horseback, and their goods and other effects were carried in saddle-bags or packs on the backs of horses. Drapers and other merchants also in those days carried their wares and fabrics on horseback through the country, and were generally known as packmen. They had regular times of visiting the more important towns, just as commercial travellers have now, but of course the intervals between such visits were, as a rule, much longer. When they arrived, intimation was duly given by the town crier by tuck of drum, of which the following may be considered a specimen :—"This is to give notice that Gabriel Fleming, merchant and trader, from the Cross of Glasgow will to-morrow show the newest and most elegant fashions of ladies costumes in the big room of Moll Walker's house in the Long Vennel." Very likely Moll was a tapster who kept a hostelry at which packmen put up on their rounds, and no doubt the ladies of those days—like the ladies of more modern days—spent no little time in overhauling the wares and fabrics exhibited, and not improbably getting an occasional taste of Moll's ale at the said Gabriel's expense.

With the help of the gardeners and the wheel-barrows the work proceeded apace, and

in the year 1710 the harbours and quays were finished amid gréat rejoicings, the whole having cost the sum of £5,555 11s 1d. The breasts connecting the quays, however, were not built at this time, nor indeed until 1764, when the whole had been transferred to the Town Council under the charter of 1751. Until that date, therefore, the beach existed very much as before the harbour was built, and vessels requiring to be caulked or repaired were hauled close up at low water that the work might be done when the tide receded. The goal at which the inhabitants had so long aimed was now reached, and a harbour built worthy of the burgh, and we should say much in advance of its needs at that period. A visitor to the town the year following that in which the harbour was completed, writes of it as "a most commodious, safe, and good harbour, having 18 feet depth at spring tide." Sir John and his feuars exercised no small amount of faith in providing a harbour so much beyond their requirements, but they were amply rewarded by a large increase of trade, and it is to be hoped that the Harbour Trustees of 1878, who seemingly have equal faith, may have an equal reward. Sir John, according to the arrangement, advanced money from time to time, and received bonds therefor from the treasurer of the harbour fund. These

bonds and their discharges are still in existence. The first sum advanced was on 25th May, 1705, and was for 1,000 merks; the second on 28th Feby., 1707, and was for 752 pounds 12 shillings Scots money; the third on 20th April, 1710, and was for 2,000 merks; the fourth on 25th Sept., 1714, and was for 2,439 pounds 12 shillings and 3 pence Scots. These are all the advances so far as can be traced, and they were all repaid out of the harbour fund by the year 1730. The bonds were paid off according to their dates, whenever sufficient money was accumulated, the first being discharged on 22nd Nov., 1720, and the last on 5th Dec., 1730. In doing so our ancestors showed an example worthy of being imitated by their successors, who, we fear, sometimes make promises in respect to sinking funds when asking powers from Parliament the fulfilment of which they afterwards use stratagem to evade.

The sum raised by the malt tax and the other payments referred to having by the year 1730 paid the whole cost of the harbour must have amounted on an average to about £200 per annum. It seems extraordinary that such a large sum should have been got from such a source, but when it is remembered that ale was the common drink of the people and that it was universally used it is not so wonderful. At this period whisky was not used at all, nor

indeed until more than twenty years later, when it was introduced by the name of aqua vitae. Probably some portion of the brewings may have been exported, but the greater proportion was no doubt consumed at home, and although the results from ale drinking may not have been so immediately mischievous as those from whisky drinking, they were not by any means of the most wholesome kind. This we find from the police records of the burgh of Cartsdyke of that date, which are still extant, and were discovered by the late Mr George Williamson when searching for information regarding the family of our renowned townsman James Watt. Mr Thomas Watt, mathematician in Cartsdyke, the grandfather of James Watt, was for a time Baron Bailie of Cartsdyke, and on the 15th of November, 1712, it was represented to him that some women who were too fond of ale were in the habit of displenishing their houses when their husbands were at sea that they might indulge the craving of their morbid appetites. He, therefore, issued the following notice for the purpose of checking such a pernicious habit, which we have too much reason to fear has not altogether ceased, even in this year of grace 1878 :—"It being represented as a grievance that several brewers within this burgh do take in



pledge or buy from some persons within the barony or burgh several pieces of household furniture or wearing apparel far within the value, and from persons who have no right to sell or pledge the same, whereby several persons are exceedingly prejudiced: For preventing, whereof, it is hereby enacted that no brewer shall take in pledge or buy any such goods from any woman without the consent of her husband. It being hereby enacted that all such brewers or others who shall contravene this Act shall restore all such goods to the husbands of the women pledgers or sellers, and that without anything to be paid by the said husbands therefor; and that such brewer or other that shall be convicted of the breach of this Act shall be liable in ten pounds Scots money of fine *toties quoties*. and that over and above restoring the goods foresaid.—(Signed) THOMAS WATT, Bailie; JAMES WATT, Clerk."





## OUR HARBOURS.

### ARTICLE V.

Besides looking after the new harbour at this date (1707), Sir John Shaw had duties to perform as one of the commissioners for preventing the importation of "foreign manufacture, victuals, butter, cheese, horse, molt, and beef into the country." The law which prohibited the importation of such articles was a good deal worse than the proposed prohibitory Live Cattle Importation Act of 1878, bad as it is. It was imposed solely for behoof of the landed interest, and tended to keep up prices at a time when the miserable cultivation of the land in Scotland rendered it unfit to produce sufficient food even for its then limited population. The law, which was very unpopular, struck not only at foreign countries, but also at Ireland, which, producing then as it does still more than was required for its own population, was always ready to sell to a good merchant. It was considered therefore by the common people to be commendable rather

than otherwise to break this law, and run in after dark boats from Ireland loaded with beef, milt, butter, and other prohibited articles. Among those engaged in this traffic was one "Gavin Pow, merchant-traveller in Scotland, and sometime betwixt the same and Ireland;" and Sir John having heard that the said Gavin had on the 13th of July, 1707, run a cargo from Ireland and landed the same between Greenock and Port-Glasgow, instructed his servant and assistant in carrying out the said prohibitory law, Matthew Crawford, residing in Easter Greenock, to proceed towards Port-Glasgow and there seize the said Gavin Pow, and such provisions as he might have landed. Matthew, on arriving at the place, however, found he was too late to seize the goods, which had been removed; but being satisfied that the law had been broken, he followed Gavin to Port-Glasgow, and did apprehend him therein the house of Robert Rodger, merchant. As might be expected, and as was usual when attempts were made to put this unpopular law into force, a crowd collected and the officer was deforced, as stated in a libel—a copy of which is to be found in Mr Hector's Judicial Records of Renfrewshire—at the instance of the said Matthew Crawford against Robert Rodger and another. Among other things, the libel alleges "That

the said Robert Rodger did illegally and unjustly open the door and let in the rabble, who did drag and beat the said Matthew Crawford to the ground and give him many black and blue strokes, and did most masterfully and violently rescue the said Gavin Pow, the prisoner." Sir John was annoyed at his servant having been assaulted and the prisoner escaping, and he backed up Matthew in his prosecution of Rodger, but owing to some irregularities in the mode of making the capture, the libel was dismissed by the Court.

That this law against the importation of provisions was felt to be a great hardship, may be seen from the following petition, addressed to Parliament shortly before the case above referred to :—"Your petitioners and complainers urge that all acts and impositions made and imposed for restraining and in-bringing of victual may be discharged, it being without example in any part of the world, and so much the more that the whole sheriffdoms of Dumbarton and Renfrew are not able to sustain themselves in the most plentiful years that ever fell out, without supplies from foreign ports. And seeing victual is become the greatest commodity now in Europe, that it may be declared lawful to merchants to import the same freely within this kingdom at all times without any opposition." Our ancestors, from this petition,

which was presented to the Scots Parliament before the Union with England, would seem to have had a true conception of the great principles afterwards successfully contended for by Cobden, Bright, and Villiers, when agitating for the repeal of the iniquitous Corn Laws.

When the harbour was drawing near completion application was made to the Board of Customs to establish a regular branch office at Greenock. Sir John, who had been elected as member of Parliament for Renfrewshire, on 8th July 1708, himself presented the petition and conducted the negotiations, and ultimately succeeded in having the prayer of the petition granted. The branch, however, was to be subordinate to Port-Glasgow, which was then and for long after the head Customs establishment on the Clyde. The officials stationed at Greenock were a tide surveyor, three land-waiters, seven tide-waiters, six boatmen, and one weigher. Sheds were built at the head of the East Quay—which were afterwards called the town cellars—for storing goods until they were transhipped to Glasgow, or put into the warehouse at the Royal Closs. The East Quay itself was bonded, and vessels with sugar, rum, tobacco, mahogany, and cotton were unloaded at it, the other quays being occupied with the herring and coasting traffic. In

addition to the export of herrings, a considerable trade now sprung up between Greenock and the Continent in Colonial produce, chiefly tobacco and sugar, which, after being landed, was reshipped in smaller craft for various ports in Holland, France, and the Baltic, iron, hemp, wines, brandies, hollands, and and fruit being brought back in exchange.

The benefit of the new harbour now became manifest, a large number of vessels which formerly unloaded at Port-Glasgow being attracted thither by the facilities for getting out and in without the delay incident to beating up the narrow channel and rounding Garvel Point. From these facilities Greenock gradually eclipsed its old rival, until at length the tables were fairly turned, and Port-Glasgow Customhouse became a subordinate branch of the Greenock establishment. Even on its special business of retranshipping foreign cargoes into boats, floats, or scows, and forwarding them to Glasgow, Greenock made heavy inroads, to the chagrin of the shipping agents there, who sometimes remonstrated very earnestly with the Glasgow merchants for preferring it to New Glasgow, or Little Glasgow, as they delighted to call it. The first office used as a Custom-house was in the row of houses on the south side of Shaw Street. This row extended from Cross-shore Street to where Cathcart Street

now reaches the harbour, and fronted the beach. Beyond that was then the Row-end, now called Rue-end Street. The office was thus conveniently situated between the East Quay and the bonded warehouse in the Royal Closs at the Row-end.

It was not until several years after the branch of the Customhouse was established, and the trade in bonded goods had largely increased, that the Mid and West Quays were also licensed, and the office removed from Shaw Street to the West Breast, where it remained for many years. The following is the gist of a statement laid before the Board of Customs when asking that these two quays be included in the licence:—"For several years after the harbour was built the union of the two kingdoms was in its infancy, and the trade was not so great as to require that the Mid and West Piers should also be made legal, but for some years past it must be remarked with pleasure that the American trade from the river of Clyde in general, and with it the trade of Greenock in particular, has so much increased that there has not been less than between six and eight thousand hogsheads of tobacco imported annually by the merchants of Glasgow and others, which importation creates a considerable trade in exportation of same to the Continent, and also in shipping the home

manufactures necessary for purchasing the said tobacco; and the trade is all the greater, because not only do the ships coming into Greenock load there, but vessels coming into Port-Glasgow prefer, for conveniency in getting away, to fall down to Greenock and there take in the bulk of their outward cargo of goods." Greenock, at this time became the chief port for ships from Virginia loaded with tobacco and cotton, and so close was the connection between it and that colony, which was then somewhat unhealthy, that it was frequently remarked that there was scarcely a family in town but had some relative—a father, son, brother, or cousin—buried in a Virginian grave. This trade continued to increase until the breaking out of the American war of independence, when it was diminished to a considerable extent.

The rapid increase of foreign trade stirred up jealousy at the English seaports, and the merchants of London, Bristol, Liverpool, and Whitehaven sent in a memorial to the Board of Customs, stating that through collusion between the merchants and Customs authorities at Greenock the revenue was being defrauded, and that they were unable to conduct an honest business, being from this cause undersold in the Continental markets by vessels from the Clyde. About 1716 commissioners were sent down to in-



quire as to the truth of these allegations, and after doing so they reported that they were altogether unfounded, but recommended that the Customs staff be somewhat increased. Not satisfied with this report, the representatives of these English ports subsequently applied to the Treasury for another commission of inquiry, which also was granted, and again cleared the Customs officials and merchants of Greenock from the charges made against them. These attempts to injure the character of the Greenock merchants and Customs officials seem to have been made as much for the purpose of stopping the trade of the port as for remedying any abuse of revenue laws that might exist. They were for the time unsuccessful, as, although called like Balaam to ban the rising port, the commissioners blessed it. Foiled in this way, these traders then approached Parliament by petition, supported by the whole influence London and the other towns could bring to bear; and here they were more successful, and got a resolution carried which would, if put into the form of an Act, have been ruinous to Greenock, as it would have taken away the liberty of foreign trade, and that on the mere *ex parte* statement made by trade rivals.

Scotland has oftener than once had occasion to complain of the unfairness of the British

Parliament. In the matter of the Darien scheme, in Church questions, and other matters affecting the country, English members have too often voted under the influence of ignorance and jealousy, without due regard to the special circumstances of the case or the difference in law and practice between the two kingdoms. Greenock at that time was nearly a victim to one of those fits, and it required all the efforts of Sir John Shaw and the Scotch members generally to prevent its liberty of foreign trade being taken away. When the reports of the commissioners exonerating Greenock were produced, however, and read to the Commons, they altered their intention to deprive it of those privileges, and ended the matter by the very moderate resolution to change the Customs officials, and send down new men from London and Bristol in their stead. It was no doubt hard enough for these traders to be undersold in the Continental markets by a young upstart like Greenock that was scarcely out of its teens as a shipping port; but we believe the reason could be accounted for without being attributed to either artificial or fraudulent means. For example, the Clyde vessels would be fitted out, equipped, and manned at far less cost than those of London, or Bristol; while the landing charges and harbour dues in a rising port with abundance of labour

would be considerably cheaper than at these ports. These reasons combined might make a difference of say a farthing in the pound on tobacco—the principal article complained about—which would be quite sufficient to give them the command of the market. We know at the present day how a bounty of little more than a farthing in the pound given by the French and Dutch Governments has injuriously affected the sugar trade (in loaves especially) of this country, and we can understand how a similar difference would affect the English tobacco merchants of that date. The cause, however, is very different, the French bounty being an artificial and somewhat fraudulent means of cheapening the price of sugar and underselling the home manufacturer, while the tobacco was cheapened by the Greenock merchants simply because it cost them less to import, and they were probably content with smaller profits.





## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE VI.

Although the result of the inquiries made by the commissioners into the management of the Customs at Greenock showed that there was no real grounds for the charge of collusion between the officers and merchants, Parliament, as already stated, saw fit to make a change. This was done by appointing fresh men from London and Bristol, and transferring the former elsewhere. The old as well as the new officials, it may be stated, were Englishmen, the Scotch commissioners, when negotiating the Union, having agreed that, as in Scotland very little revenue was derived from Customs duties, and the existing collectors had but small experience, men from the English ports with larger experience should be appointed in order to introduce a proper system of levying the duties of both Customs and Excise. Notwithstanding the efforts made by those at the head of these departments to enforce the revenue laws, it was long before the people

were got to yield obedience to them. But few duties were imposed before the Union, and the people now took hardly with them, being persuaded that Scotland in the matter of taxation had not got fair play in the treaty. They looked therefore on the evasion of such duties as no offence, and smuggled goods into the country without the least scruple whenever they had an opportunity. The fact is that at that time the contraband goods imported were greater than those that paid duty, and it was exceedingly difficult to detect the smugglers, as every class were in league with them.

Writing within twenty years after the Union a patriotic Scotchman, who foresaw the mischievous results to morals as well as commerce that would ensue if the running in of contraband articles was not checked, thus inveighed against it in a letter to the Convention of Royal Burghs :—"To trace the disease under which we at present labour to its source we must look back to the union of the kingdoms. The treaty for that Union was conducted much against the inclinations of the generality of the people of Scotland, and the only thing that rendered it palatable was the great advantage that must ensue to the country from the communication of trade to which by the Union it was to be admitted. This consideration was surely weighty,

and had the people honestly made use of that privilege to which they were invited the complaint under which we now suffer would never have had a being. But unfortunately the people took the most mischievous of turns, and in place of pursuing fair trade, they universally, with the exception of Glasgow, Aberdeen, and some of the other places that had previously been accustomed to foreign trade, took to smuggling. The smuggler was the favourite. His prohibited or high-duty goods were run ashore by the boats of whatever part of the coast he came near. When ashore they were guarded by the country people from the Customhouse officers; when seized they were in most cases rescued; and if a seizure did take place and the guilty persons were captured, the juries nearly in every instance found a verdict for the defenders." In the rescue of seized articles women frequently took a principal part, as the following case will show:—On the 9th July, 1717, Robert Cochran, land surveyor of His Majesty's Customs at Port-Glasgow, having, with some other officers of the Customs, made a seizure of several casks of brandy in the stable of William Stirrat, merchant in Port-Glasgow, and taken possession of them as contraband goods, a mob of women laid violent hold of Mr Cochran and carried him

off, and a breach being made in the wall of the stable by their male accomplices, the brandy was taken out and carried away by Stirrat and John Taylor, cooper, and others. When the brandy was got into a boat and it had fairly left for Greenock or some place of security in the woods between Greenock and Port-Glasgow, the hint was given to the women, and Cochran was released. He thereafter raised a complaint against the two men, and got them mulcted in a penalty ; but to avoid payment they absconded. Both in Greenock and Port-Glasgow women, designed in the old records as wives of merchants, horse-hirers, masons, fleshers, and others of a class above the lowest, were active participators in such mobs, being pushed to the front, in the hope, which was generally well founded, that the officers of revenue would not use their weapons in defending themselves against such assailants. In the case above referred to no fewer than thirteen women were engaged in deforcing Mr Cochran, and that gentleman having ascertained their names complained against them to the Fiscal, who had them duly cited before the Sheriff, and he, after probation, found them guilty, "and therefore fines and unlaws each of them in the sum of five pounds sterling to the Fiscal, and further finds that

the husbands of such of the said delinquents as were married were liable for the same. And ordained the said women to be carried to prison, there to lie till payment thereof, or till they find sufficient caution for the same. —(Signed) R. SEMPLE, Sh.-sub."

Sometimes these encounters between the officers and smugglers and their confederates ended more disastrously than in the foregoing case. It was so in connection with a ship called the Blackgrove, bound for Greenock. When near the Cloch a boat was put off from the shore to the ship, and into it the goods were removed. This being observed by Hugh M'Lachlan, a revenue officer who had been on the watch, he and nine other boatmen in the revenue service put off in a wherry to seize the said goods. They were assailed, however, with such violence with sticks and stones by the smugglers that M'Lachlan was killed, and another of the boatmen had his arm broken, and the whole were more or less put *hors de combat*. An indictment was raised against those who took part in this affray, but they all absconded, with the exception of two—James Lade and James Morris. They seem to have been too old to have taken part in the struggle, and although apprehended the diet against them was ultimately deserted. These instances serve to show how rife this practice was and how lawless those occupied in it were



apt to become. Brandy and wine were two of the articles most commonly smuggled, and the Convention of Royal Burghs complained most bitterly against their use, as well as against the mode of importation, as they were to a large extent superseding the home-made liquors, and the sugar-brandy and rum from the plantations.

The brandies and wines run in without paying duties were chiefly from France and Spain, which countries took little or none of our staple exports—linen and herrings—in exchange, the duty on these articles when imported into France and Spain being so high as to be almost prohibitory. The result, of course, was just as it is now when we have a bad harvest. The bullion was drained out of the country to pay for the smuggled brandy to countries which took little or none of our goods, and thus it was lost as a circulating medium, and Scotland made so much the poorer. The plantations in America and the West Indies took large quantities of our staple exports, and, as the aforesaid writer insists, it was only fair we should take their staple exports in return; but the low price at which the liquors which paid no duty could be obtained rendered the plantation rum and brandy at that time quite unsaleable. To some extent it also hurt the home brewers, and no doubt the owner of the

brewery in Greenock, which was then (1720) situated in Dalrymple Street, close to the West Burn Bridge, suffered as well as others.

There was, however, another article which hurt the brewers even more, and does so to this day—that article was tea, and to show how changed the habits of the people are since it was first introduced, we will again quote from the same writer :—"For some years after the Union this mischief (through the running in of brandy, rum, and tea) continued without being very sensibly felt. The consumption of beer and ale was no doubt in some degree impaired, but as the price of wine never came so low as to bring it within reach of the populace, and the vice of punch-drinking had not prevailed over the meaner sort, who were accustomed to no better liquor than two-penny, and as the *more pernicious practice of tea-drinking* was confined to what may be called people of condition, the excise, though lower than it had formerly been, produced sums fit to answer the expense of the civil government, and such towns as had an impost on beer and ale found no considerable diminution of their revenues. When, however, the opening of a trade with the East Indies, first at Ostend and afterwards in Sweden, brought the price of the tea in the northern parts of Europe so low that the meanest labouring

man could compass the purchase of it; when the connection which the dealers in this country had with many Scotsmen in the service of the Swedish Company at Gothenburg introduced the common use of that *drug* amongst the lowest of the people; when sugar, the inseparable companion of tea, came to be in the possession of the very poorest housewife, where formerly it had been a great rarity, and thereby was at hand to mix with water and brandy or rum; and when tea and punch became thus the diet and debauch of all the beer and ale drinkers, the effects were very suddenly and severely felt. The Excise sunk in proportion as the demand for these contraband commodities increased. The revenue from the imposts on ale in cities and towns fell off, as these vices prevailed more in the town than in the open country; and at present the melancholy experience of every man informs him that there is no bullion left in the country—at least none in proportion to what was some years ago." The above quotation gives some idea of the state of matters existing in Scotland 150 years ago. Then, as now, the tea was a sore drawback to the brewers, but its mode of importation being chiefly contraband, was the cause of much vexation to honest men who wished well to their country. What such a beer swilling nation as Scotland was in those days

would have been brought to by this time had tea not been introduced, is hard to say ; but bad as we are we fear the condition of the country could have been greatly worse. It will be an encouragement to the Provost and those engaged with him in setting up tea and coffee shops to know that what was in those old days characterised unjustly as a "pernicious drug," has already, by its diffusion and use among all classes, done much to lessen the use of "pernicious drinks," and the Workman Public-houses now being set up we doubt not will in the course of a very few years be such a counter attraction to the grog shops of the present that some one will have to write regarding them as was done in regard to breweries in 1722 :—

"Tea is become the common breakfast of all sorts of people, bluegowns and fishcarriers among the lave, and in consequence the decay of the brewery is immense, and the main cause of it is the use of tea." Of course the mode of importation was unjustifiable, ruinous to honest trading, and in the long-run ruinous to most of those engaged in it. Although some no doubt made considerable profits, yet inquiry disclosed the fact that the great majority lost both in purse and character. Indeed its effects were so injurious to the whole morale of the country that we do not blame a man having the interest of Scotland

at heart writing strongly against it and all its concomitants. Had the same worthy gentleman been living in these days we doubt not he would, in the earnestness of his patriotism, been a promoter of the present movement for public coffee shops.

The Greenock Brewery, as we have said, felt the effects of the tea fuddling as well as its neighbours, but trade generally continued to improve, and the progress and prosperity of the burgh brought trading men and tradesmen to share in it. Among others we find a "nottar public," or lawyer. This gentleman was a Mr John Alexander, and seems to have been the Bailie Alexander mentioned in the first charter granted by Sir John Shaw. Very likely he was invited to Greenock by that gentleman, as the rising importance of the port would no doubt require to have some one acquainted with law resident therein. The immigration of such a professional man was of itself a certificate of the increase of the burgh, if we take Tibbie Tamson's way of reasoning at all events—"Oh yes, neebour, ye may we'll ken the toun's thriving when ye see thae legal gentry come fleeing about. As the Scripture says—'Wheresoever the carcass is thither the eagles are gathered together.'" Cartsdike, too, could boast of a writer, Hugh

Paterson by name ; and we find him involved in a lawsuit with Sir Archibald Stewart, of Blackhall, in the year 1711. A client of Paterson's had sold Sir Archibald some implements and could not get payment, that gentleman seemingly objecting to the price, or being slow to pay, or both, the account being twelve years old when the action was raised. Paterson gets the debt assigned to Mr Alexander, probably thinking that he had a better chance of recovering the amount than himself. Alexander thereupon raised an action against Sir Archibald for the amount, some five pounds sterling. This provoked the ire of the baronet, and in his defence he exclaims against "this scum and scurrilous conveyence" to the assignee, which he says should be dashed and discouraged, and all others of a like nature, because the cedent is living and able to pursue his own debts; and he further inveighs against Mr Alexander, "who pretends to be ane writer," for making himself a party to "such poor and mean whimsies against ane honourable gentleman," and asks that the case be "crushed and discouraged." The case came before the Sheriff, and on the motion of Sir Archibald it was remitted to Thomas Rennie, chirurgion at Gourcock, to decide the value. This gentleman, whoever he was, whether doctor or only barber, was taken down to Ardgowan to see

the implements which had been bought twelve years previously, and he there and then gave an award, which was drawn up by Sir Archibald's chaplain, George M'Vey, and duly signed by him. The amount allowed was eighteen pounds Scots, being not much more than a fourth of the sum demanded. The place where the award was written and the surroundings lead us to hope that the worthy chirurgion was, like what Cæsar's wife should have been, above suspicion, as otherwise most people would hesitate to say that the time, place, and companionship was the most suitable for deciding a case in which the owner of the demesne was a party. There is a bare possibility that the honest man did not dine with the baronet, but it is very bare; and when people are wicked enough to say that even some Greenock Bailies are not above being influenced by a dinner, it is not surprising that as much should be hinted about the arbiter. We have a decided impression from the whole circumstances that it was a fortunate thing for Greenock, and Cartsydyke too, that in the days of heritable jurisdictions and high-handed procedure of persons in position they had not only "ane," but twa "wryters," who were not afraid to bring even a County magnate like Sir Archibald to book.



## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE VII.

Looking to the ceremony which is to take place on Thursday next, the first day of August, at the beginning of operations in connection with the new Wet Dock, we propose to-day to give a brief summary of the origin and opening of the existing harbours. In doing so we anticipate to some extent the history of "Our Harbours" which we are publishing from week to week ; but it will only be in outline, and fuller details will be afterwards given in ordinary course. Before referring to the harbours, however, we deem it expedient to correct what we conceive to be a mistake in reference to the derivation of the name of the town itself. The old impression that the name Greenock was derived from a green oak which grew in the Square, has long ago been exploded, and the name is now generally believed to be of Celtic origin. That it is so we have no manner of doubt, but we do not think the word selected—"Grianaig" (sunny bay) has the termina-



tion necessary to identify it with the modern Greenock. In the old charters Greenock is variously spelt—Grenoc, Grinok, Grenok, and, considering the common practice of the writers of charters and other documents, when dealing with Celtic names, we have a decided impression that the words Grian-chnoc (sunny hill) would seem to be much nearer in terminology, and quite as appropriate in its description of the locality as Grianraig. The hill or plateau where the Mansionhouse now stands was, and is, a Sunny Hill from early morn till the great monarch of the day has disappeared in the far west, and in olden times was more likely to give a name to the place than the bay, the more especially as the old Celtic race which in remote times inhabited Strathclyde were not great lovers of the sea. Another reason why Grian-chnoc (Hill of the Sun) is more likely is that not improbably it may have been used in pre-Roman times as a high place for the worshippers of the sun as a deity. Names often had their origin in such a source, and there are other Hills of the Sun in Scotland which are believed to derive their cognomen from this circumstance. Of course this latter reason is but a supposition, and so of no great weight; but the former, arising out of the termination and spelling of the name Greenock, we deem to be pretty conclusive in

favour of Grian-chnoc as against Grian-aig. We now return to the subject of the harbours, and will as briefly as possible state what we have learned regarding them.

#### THE FIRST PIER OR HARBOUR.

As stated in a previous number, this pier or landing place was built by John Shaw of Greenock, shortly after he received the first charter in 1635. In the second charter of 1670 it is referred to as being built, and condonation is therein granted him, for having in its erection encroached on the Crown rights, by building beyond the limits laid down in the first charter. It was of considerable length, running out into the bay, something, we suppose, like the quay at Helensburgh, but was built on the drystone dyke principle, without mortar. The cost was entirely defrayed by the Laird himself, and the work was begun and finished under his own supervision, without any formality.

#### THE SECOND HARBOUR, NOW THE WEST HARBOUR.

We have already stated pretty fully the facts connected with this harbour, which was begun in 1707 and finished in 1710 amidst great rejoicings. The east and west quays were of circular form, with another quay or tongue jutting out in the centre, called the

Mid Quay. The breasts, however, were not built until the management of the harbours had been transferred to the Town Council by Sir John Shaw, in his Charter of 1751. On 1st August of that year the first magistrates and Council were elected, and were as follow :—

Bailies :

John Alexander and Robert Donald.

Treasurer :

James Butcher.

Councillors :

William Gammill.

Robert Rae.

James Warden.

James Watt.

Gabriel Mathie.

Nathan Wilson.

The cost of the harbour, exclusive of the breasts and sheds, was £5,555 11s 1d, which was defrayed, as previously stated, from the proceeds of a tax on the malt used for brewing and certain anchorage dues contributed by Sir John. The ground enclosed consisted of 8 acres 3 roods and 10 falls. Since then the quays have been broadened and the waterspace in consequence lessened, so that the area of the harbour is now only  $7\frac{1}{2}$  acres, with a quayage of 4,040 feet.

OLD DRY DOCK.

The want of a graving dock for caulking and repairing vessels had long been felt by the merchants and shipowners whose vessels frequented the port. The chief place then

used for making such repairs was the bank of mud in the then East Harbour, which, at low water, was uncovered, but this was extremely inconvenient. In 1782 communication was entered into between some of the merchants and the Town Council with a view to get that body to erect a dock, but they had neither sufficient money nor power to borrow money for that purpose. They agreed, however, to give ground in the West Harbour, at the foot of the Long Vennel, for the dock, at a nominal feu-duty, if a company could be got up who would undertake such a work. After considerable efforts a company was formed, and upwards of £3,500 subscribed. Mr Anderson, the preses of the company, having informed the Town Council that they were still short of the sum needed to finish the contract, they agreed to contribute £580 from the town funds to help in such an important work, and to take over the dock at cost price from the shareholders, should they subsequently receive power to do so from Parliament. The dock was completed in 1786, and cost about £4,000, the contractor being a Mr Hugh Kirkwood, mason. Having received the necessary powers, the Harbour Trustees took it over in 1834. It is 220 feet long at floor level, 33 feet 11 inches wide at entrance, and 9 feet 9 inches deep on the sill at high water.

## OLD STEAMBOAT QUAY.

The ground to the eastward of the East Quay having been acquired from Lord Cathcart, it was resolved in 1788 to add an eastern arm to that quay. It was also resolved to take down the old circular arm, which ran westward, and rebuild it in square fashion, as it is now. A contract was therefore entered into between the Town Council and one James Riddoch, builder; but he having failed, it was taken over and completed by Mr Kirkwood, the contractor for the dock. The new arm was carried eastward over part of the shallows or shoal which existed at this point for about sixty feet. This extension, exclusive of the ground, cost £3840. When completed, it was found that owing to the shoal or rock called the Leo, which extended still further to the east than what was covered by the new arm, there was great difficulty in passing round to the back of that quay. Vessels even stuck on the rock occasionally, and had to remain for a whole tide in imminent danger. It was therefore resolved to extend the quay so as cover the Leo entirely. For that purpose a contract was entered into with Mr John Scott, shipbuilder (grandfather to the younger Scotts formerly of Finnart and Garvel Park), on 23rd June 1791, which

was duly executed. The Leo was so called from its resemblance at certain states of the tide to a crouching lion. It was situated at what was long called Waddel's corner, now the waiting-rooms, and although then believed to be covered and put out of the way of doing harm for ever, we have the impression that it has since more than once been accused as a common boulder, by those who knew nothing of the old Leo, of doing mischief to a ship's bottom. Under the superintendence of the present harbour engineer, however, it has been entirely removed. Subsequent to this addition being made, and between the years 1809 and 1818, new breasts appear to have been built round all the old harbours and facing the river, and the quays were then advanced some additional feet riverwards. The quayage of the Steamboat Quay, which is sometimes called the Customhouse Quay, is 1,000 feet.

#### THE EAST INDIA HARBOUR.

This harbour, which when built was specified as extending from the East Quay now the Steamboat Quay on the west to the Dailing Burn on the east, was begun in the year 1805. It was designed by John Rennie, engineer, who estimated its cost at £43,836, exclusive of the ground; and Andrew Brocket, Glasgow, was the contrac-

tor. It encloses, according to Mr Rennie's report, 9 statute acres, and was mainly built to accommodate the East India trade. The area of this harbour, also, has been lessened since it was built by the broadening of the quays and the building of the New Dry Dock. It is now only  $6\frac{1}{2}$  acres, and has a lineal frontage of 3,380 feet. At the quay on the east side of the harbour a large arch and gateway was at first erected by request of the Commissioners of Customs, but in a few years it was taken down as inconvenient for the traffic passing up and down. At the laying of the foundation-stone on the 29th May, 1805, there was a great demonstration in town, the trades and Freemasons turning out in full force to do honour to the occasion. The stone was laid by Hugh Crawford, the Chief Magistrate, as Greenock could not then boast of a Provost. The following were the Magistrates and Town Councillors in office at that date :—

Magistrates :

Hugh Crawford, Chief Magistrate.

John Hamilton, Junior Magistrate.

Treasurer :

Robert Bannatyne.

Councillors :

Alexander Dunlop,      Thomas Ramsay,

Andrew Thomson,      Alan Ker,

Duncan M'Naught,      John Laird.

## NEW DRY DOCK.

This dock was begun in 1818. It was planned by Mr Burnet, the then Master of Works, but was merely a modified design of a dock proposed to be built by Mr Rennie in 1805, but which the Trustees then thought too costly. It is situated on the south-west corner of the East India Harbour, and cost £20,000. Mr Rennie's plan would have cost £36,000. The contractor was Mr Donald Mathieson, of Edinburgh, who had just finished building the Customhouse. There is no trace of any demonstration having taken place in connection with this dock. On the contrary, there seems to have been a sore feeling among local politicians at the time, and it is probable a public demonstration was dispensed with. Several changes were made among the executive at the election subsequent to its commencement, which may have been another reason for the usual ceremony being omitted. The dock seems, however, at the time it was built to have been much required, and it has served the port well for nearly sixty years. It is 356 feet in length at floor level, 38 feet wide at entrance, and has a depth of 11 feet 10 inches at high water. The following were the Magistrates and Town Councillors in office in 1818 :—



**Magistrates :**

Quintin Leitch, Senior Magistrate.

John Denniston, Junior Do.

**Treasurer :**

James Hunter.

**Councillors :**

William Macfie, Thomas Stevenson,

James Likly, Robert Hunter,

James Oughterson, Duncan Service.

**Town Clerk :**

Claud Marshall.

**Chamberlain :**

Archibald Wilson.

**THE VICTORIA HARBOUR.**

This harbour, which is situated to the east of the East India Harbour, was designed by Mr Joseph Locke, M.P., engineer, and the contractors were Stephenson, M'Kenzie, & Brassey. It was commenced in 1846 and was finished in 1850. It encloses  $5\frac{1}{2}$  acres, and has a depth at low water of 14 feet, and at high water of 24 feet. Its quayage amounts to 2,350 feet. In its mode of construction it was a great advance on the previous harbours, and cost fully £120,000. The spoil from it was deposited at the east side of the Bay of Quick and formed Albert Quay before the harbour of that name was built. When Albert Harbour was

being dug the spoil was again lifted and redeposited on the beach to the westward, with a retaining wall in front, and now forms the beautiful Esplanade extending from Campbell Street to the Battery. Before the Victoria Harbour was begun there was considerable diversity of opinion as to whether the harbours should be east or west, and when it was fixed to go east a good deal of acerbity was shown by some in connection with the question, their contention being that the harbours should be built seaward and not in Carlsdyke Bay. Looking back, we cannot but acknowledge that the then Trustees displayed considerable wisdom in placing it in close proximity to the railway, which was the main cause of their deciding on that spot. On Thursday, the 17th October, 1850, the water was let into the harbour, and on the same day the foundation-stone of Sir Gabriel Wood's Asylum was also laid. The demonstration which took place was headed by the municipal authorities, and was of the most imposing character, the Seamen, Trades, Freemasons, and Oddfellows turning out in strength. There were about a dozen bands of music, and flags and trade designs were exhibited in great profusion. The following gentlemen were in office when the construction of this harbour was commenced in 1846 :—

Provost :

Adam Fairrie.

Bailies :

Duncan Weir, Robert Macfie,  
John Gray, James Johnston Grieve.

Treasurer :

Andrew Lindsay.

Councillors :

James Arbuckle, William Allison,  
George Todd, Andrew Anderson,  
Thos. Oliphant Hunter, Matthew Orr,  
James Kerr, John Ferguson,  
Duncan Alexander Campbell, John M'Tivain.

The following were in office when the work  
was completed and the harbour opened in  
1850 :—

Provost :

Samuel Paterson.

Bailies :

Thomas Oliphant Hunter, James Duff,  
Neil Broun, Thomas Hamlin.

Treasurer :

Duncan Alexander Campbell.

Councillors :

Charles Grey,	James Arbuckle,
Alexander Anderson,	Hugh Dempster,
John Neill,	William Allison,
John Martin,	Robert Thorne,
Hew M'Ilwraith,	Robert Macfie.

Town Clerk :

John Kerr Gray.

Chamberlain :

John Adam.

## THE ALBERT HARBOUR.

This harbour occupies the space where Albert Quay and the timber pond belonging to Messrs Scott & Sons formerly stood. In its construction another old landmark—namely, the ropework originally built by Bailie Donald in 1725—was removed, as well as the site of Fort Jervis, erected during the French war at the end of the last century. This harbour, which encloses 10½ acres, has a quayage of 4,230 feet, and a depth of 14 feet at low water and 24 feet at high water. It was designed by Messrs Bell & Miller, engineers, Glasgow, and the contractors were Wm. & James York, latterly of Greenock. The harbour, exclusive of ground or sheds, cost about £200,000; including them it cost over £250,000. Since being built a railway connection has been made, and it is now one of our most important harbours. In forming the sea wall a new class of work was introduced, consisting of granite blocks placed on cast-iron piles, with a backing of concrete. This class of work, although somewhat experimental, has turned out so far very satisfactory. At first the trustees were dubious of it, and refused to proceed until they had got the opinion of an eminent engineer—Mr Thomas Page. He having certified to its substantiality and suitability, it was carried

out according to specification. The foundation stone was laid with great ceremony by Provost Grieve, on the 7th August, 1862, the largest procession ever seen in Greenock taking part in the demonstration. So extensive was it that the head of the procession was at Albert Harbour before the tail of it had left Cathcart Square. About 7,000 people, consisting of the various trades and societies, took part in it. They had a great display of banners and trade devices, and were accompanied by upwards of twenty musical bands. The following were the Magistrates and Councillors in office at that date :—

Provost:

James Johnston Grieve.

Bailies:

Charles Grey, James Tennant Caird,  
Hew M'Ilwrath, Abram Lyle.

Treasurer:

Thomas Kincaid.

Councillors:

Thomas Muir Macfarlan, Robert Houston,  
James Morton, John Hunter,  
Graham Brymner, Charles Philip Hunter,  
George Adam, John Crawford Hunter,  
Thomas Shaw, John Kerr.

Town Clerk:

John Kerr Gray.

Chamberlain:

John Adam.

## PRINCES PIER.

This pier, which runs west from Albert Harbour, was mainly built to accommodate the Glasgow and South-Western Railway, but it is also used for storing deals. It is one of the few public works connected with the town regarding which one hesitates to speak with unqualified satisfaction. The piles supporting the structure were, if we mistake not, driven some 90 feet in a muddy bottom, and had to be kept in position by heavy stone ballasting in front as well as iron ties of great strength at the back. It is a good situation otherwise for a pier, and we hope it may turn out in the end more satisfactory than in the beginning. It has cost somewhere near £100,000, and the depth at low water is about 16 feet, while the quayage is 2,206 feet. It was also designed by Messrs Bell & Miller, but has been finished by the engineer for the Trustees, Mr Kinipple, who has also erected elegant waiting-rooms on it for the use of passengers. Being looked at as a mere continuation of Albert Quay, there was no special demonstration in connection with it.

## THE GARVEL DOCK.

This Graving Dock is built on the Garvel Estate, which was purchased by the Harbour Trustees in 1868 for £80,000. It is chiefly

formed of Dalbeattie granite, and is one of the finest structures of the kind in the kingdom. The engineer was Mr Walter Robert Kinniple, of Greenock, and the contractor Mr John Kirk, of Woolwich. The dock is about 650 feet in length,  $60\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide at the entrance, and 20 feet in depth on the sill at ordinary spring tides, and has a caisson for the entrance of peculiar construction, but admirably adapted for the purpose. This caisson is the invention of Mr Kinniple himself, and he has taken out a patent for it. It is a great improvement on the heavy swing bridges and dock gates usually adopted, and has a folding bridge, which, when the dock is opened, is drawn along with the caisson into a chamber at the side of the entrance. Should the caisson require repair at any time it can be floated out and into its position without much trouble.

The foundation stone was laid by Robert Steele, senior, shipbuilder, Provincial Grand Master of the Order of Freemasons, on the 6th day of July, 1871, in presence of the Trustees and a numerous body of spectators. The day was very generally made a holiday, and the Trustees, Freemasons, Trades' Societies, and Volunteers mustered in force at the Esplanade, and were there formed in order. From thence they marched in procession to where the ceremony was to

take place at Garvel Park, accompanied by bands of music, and carrying banners and trade and society emblems and devices of every description. The line was headed by the carters, next came the trade societies and Volunteers, and the Trustees and Freemasons brought up the rear. The morning was wet, but by the time appointed for the muster it cleared off, and Greenock has rarely seen such a great turnout of well-dressed and delighted spectators in her streets. The spectacle being so recent will no doubt be in the memory of most of the inhabitants, so there is no occasion for further details at present. The following were the Harbour Trustees in office, and it will be observed that they included a larger number than on previous occasions. This was owing to Parliament having in 1866 sanctioned an addition of nine to the sixteen Trustees who were Town Councillors—these nine being elected by a new constituency of shipowners and harbour ratepayers paying dues of the amount of £10 and upwards:—

Provost:

James Morton.

Bailies:

Robert Neill, Dugald Campbell,  
William Birkmyre, William Neill.

Treasurer:

William Boag Paul.



## Councillors :

James T. Caird, Donald Anderson,  
Graham Brymner, Thomas Niven,  
Duncan Hendry, Charles P. Hunter,  
Alex. Scott, Edward Wilson,  
John Fleming, George Arbuckle.

## Elected Trustees:

James Stewart, Deputy-Chairman;  
James Hamilton, Dugald Shankland,  
William Lindsay, Archibald Adam,  
Hugh Walker, Walter Grieve,  
Arthur Oughterson Leitch, Robert Davie.

## JAMES WATT DOCK.

This dock is to be formed on the Garvel estate, and the commencement of operations will be inaugurated by the ceremony of cutting the first turf by Provost Lyle on Thursday next, the first day of August, at twelve o'clock. It will be one of the largest and most complete wet docks in the kingdom, and has been named the James Watt Dock, in honour of our illustrious townsman, the inventor of the steam engine. Mr Walter Robert Kinipple, C.E., of Greenock, is the engineer, and Mr John Waddell, of Edinburgh, is the contractor. The length of the dock will be 2,000 feet, the breadth 300 feet, and from coping to bottom, 36 feet. There will be 18 feet depth of water on finished bottom at low water spring tides and 28



## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE VIII.

In 1715, the year of the rebellion, as it is called, Greenock showed its loyalty to the house of Hanover by sending a considerable detachment of volunteers to join the Duke of Argyll's army. Sir John Shaw himself, who was connected with the volunteer troop of horse, was then in Fife, where his estate of Sauchie lay, and where his enemy, the Master of Sinclair, was making a diversion in favour of the Pretender. While serving in Flanders under Marlborough, Sinclair had, in an affair of honour, killed two of Sir John's brothers, in circumstances more resembling murder than an honourable combat. Having provoked the younger of the two brothers, a meeting was arranged, and Sinclair, getting the choice of weapons, selected a kind in the use of which he was an adept, but of which his antagonist had no experience. Shaw's second was unwilling that he should fight on such unequal terms, but as Sinclair would not agree to any other weapon, the duel went on, and young Shaw was killed. His elder

We trust that Thursday will prove a propitious day for the proposed ceremony, and that the Trustees and their friends may have an agreeable trip in the Dandie Dinmont, which, we understand, has been hired for the occasion. Considering the great amount of time and attention given by them to the town's affairs, without fee or reward, no one will grudge them a pleasant day's outing. The following are the Trustees now in office :—

Provost :

Abram Lyle.

Bailies :

Edward Wilson,	Graham Brymner,
William Boag Paul,	Dugald Shankland,
John Erskine,	Dugald Campbell.

Treasurer :

Edward Blackmore.

Councillors :

John Orr, Jun.,	Donald Anderson,
John Duff,	W. O. Leitch,
Hugh Walker,	William Turner,
R. Shankland,	John Lang.

Elected Trustees :

Walter Grieve, Deputy Chairman.

William Neill,	William Lindsay,
John Scott, Yst.,	A. O. Leitch,
Thomas Prentice,	Robert Davie,
William Rankin,	Ebenezer Wallace.

Clerk to Harbour Trust :

Thomas Wilson.

Treasurer to Harbour Trust :

John Brodie.

feet at high water, and this level can be maintained at all times of the tide, if the entrance is closed by the caisson. The width of the entrance is 70 feet at coping level, and the sides of the dock, including entrance, batter at the rate of one foot in twenty-four feet.

Westward of the Wet Dock is a tidal harbour with 1,054 feet of quay wall, and an area of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  acres. Ships entering the Wet Dock pass through this harbour, which is equal in depth. The area of the Wet Dock is about 13 acres, and the length of the quay walls 6,350 feet. The area of both together will be about  $17\frac{1}{2}$  acres, and the total length of quays about 7,584 feet. The whole quay walls above low water mark will be faced with granite. The caisson with its folding bridge to the entrance will be similar in every respect to the one at the Garvel Dock, with the exception that the rollers on which it runs when the dock is being opened or shut will be fixed to the bottom of the chamber instead of to the caisson itself. The whole plans and specifications reflect the greatest credit on the skill and ingenuity of Mr Kinipple, the engineer.

It was at one time intended to go on with this dock simultaneously with the dry dock, but in consequence of the dearness of labour, which is a most important element in a work of



## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE VIII.

In 1715, the year of the rebellion, as it is called, Greenock showed its loyalty to the house of Hanover by sending a considerable detachment of volunteers to join the Duke of Argyll's army. Sir John Shaw himself, who was connected with the volunteer troop of horse, was then in Fife, where his estate of Sauchie lay, and where his enemy, the Master of Sinclair, was making a diversion in favour of the Pretender. While serving in Flanders under Marlborough, Sinclair had, in an affair of honour, killed two of Sir John's brothers, in circumstances more resembling murder than an honourable combat. Having provoked the younger of the two brothers, a meeting was arranged, and Sinclair, getting the choice of weapons, selected a kind in the use of which he was an adept, but of which his antagonist had no experience. Shaw's second was unwilling that he should fight on such unequal terms, but as Sinclair would not agree to any other weapon, the duel went on, and young Shaw was killed. His elder

brother, anxious to avenge his death, challenged Sinclair, who did not, at the time, respond, but having afterwards met accidentally hot words ensued, and Sinclair is said to have run Shaw through the body with a rapier, without giving him time to defend himself. That the fighting was considered unfair at the time is evinced by the trial and conviction of Sinclair for murder. In days when duelling was a common practice, it is not likely that such a sentence would have been passed on him had the combat been at all in accordance with the usual code of honour in such affairs. Through the connivance, it is believed, of Marlborough, Sinclair escaped from prison, and ultimately, when Bolingbroke came into power, he was pardoned, his family being influential Tories. Sir John was of course indignant that one who had wrought such havoc in his family should not only receive a pardon but be promoted to a command, and he was no doubt now rendered doubly zealous in the Hanover interest because Sinclair was for the Pretender.

Lady Shaw was also zealous on the same side, and having, in her husband's absence, received a letter from the Duke of Argyll, urging that the Greenock contingent of Militia should be sent to the camp at Stirling without delay, she exerted herself to have this done, and to provide arms for as many volun-

teers as were willing to accompany them. Two companies were raised, who left for Stirling on the 19th September, 1715. The day before they went they were formed in square, and Lady Shaw addressed them, and said "that the Protestant religion, their laws, and liberties, lives, and all that was dear to them as men and Christians, as well as His Majesty King George and the Protestant succession, were all in hazard by that unnatural rebellion." She further denounced a cause that honoured a man like Sinclair, the murderer of their two brave townsmen, Sir John's brothers, by promoting him to high command. The Rev. Mr Turner, the parish minister, Bailie Alexander, and others, also addressed them to like purpose. Ninety-two men in all volunteered, and they and the militia were taken up in boats to Glasgow, from whence they marched on the 27th to Kilsyth, and on the 29th to Stirling, where they were reviewed by General Wightman. They were ordered from Stirling to Castle Touch on the 3rd of October, where they continued till the 12th November. The Rev. Mr Turner, who was also very assiduous on behalf of the Government, came to see them while stationed there, and stayed for three weeks, acting as their chaplain. The beadle accompanied him, fully armed at the minister's expense.

On the 12th November, when the Duke

with the main body of the army marched to Dunblane, the Greenock men were ordered from Touch to Stirling. From thence fifty of them, under the command of Captain John Speirs, were despatched to Alloa to bring over all the boats they could find to the south side of the Forth to prevent the enemy crossing. They only found one, however, and having broke it, they returned to Stirling. Other thirty volunteers went from Greenock to Edinburgh on the 2nd November, from whence they returned to Glasgow as guard to a quantity of arms and ammunition which was being conveyed to that city. Afterwards they were marched to Stirling to join the Greenock companies. The expense of the rebellion to the parish of Greenock was not less than £1,529 5s 4d, besides the amount paid for the men voluntarily fitted out at the expense of the inhabitants. The following supported themselves while on service :—Captain Spiers, Lieutenant Joseph M'Adam, John Rowan, John Easdale, shipmaster; Patrick Hannah, shipmaster; Adam Boyd, Robert M'Leary, John Lyon, Robert Ræ, Archibald Cunningham, John Scott, Archd. Ritchie, James Hastie, Joseph Tucker, Andrew Lang, Robt. Moore, James Taylor, James Smith, and James Marshall. The Greenock detachment continued under arms chiefly at Stirling, until after the battle



of Sheriffmuir, when the rebels dispersed. Sir John Schaw, along with the Duke of Roxburgh, Lords Ratho, Haddington, Lauderdale, Loudoun, and Belhaven are specially mentioned as having distinguished themselves in this battle. It could scarcely, however, be said to be a victory to either army, as a wing of each was defeated. Its uncertainty, and the fact that both sides claimed the victory, gave occasion to the composition of the fine old satirical ballad entitled "The Battle of Sheriffmuir"—

There's some say that we wan,  
 Some say that they wan,  
 Some say that nane wan at a', man,  
 But ae thing I'm sure,  
 That at Sheriffmuir  
 A battle there was, which I saw, man,  
 And we ran, and they ran,  
 And they ran, and we ran,  
 And we ran, and they ran awa', man.

The real benefits of the fight remained, however, with the Royal army under the Duke of Argyll—most of the clans composing the Pretender's army, disgusted with the conduct and incapacity of their leaders, having immediately thereafter deserted his standard and returned to their homes.

During the absence of Sir John, intelligence was brought to Greenock that the Highland cateran Rob Roy Macgregor had seized all the

boats on the north side of the Clyde, and was using them for stealing cattle from the parishes of Cardross, Erskine, and Houston. His plan was to secure the cattle and convey them in boats up the Leven at Dumbarton to Loch Lomond, landing them at Rowardennan, from whence they were driven up to his fastnesses in the Braes of Balquidder. The information was accompanied by a request from these parishes for assistance, and Lady Shaw and the Baron Bailie prevailed on a hundred men to form part of a force to be sent to attack Rob and recover the booty. Arms for them were got from a 74 gun ship which then lay in the roads, and it was arranged that the man-of-war's boats and a hundred men should also accompany the expedition. The Greenock volunteers were taken up to Dumbarton in boats, where they were joined by two hundred men from Paisley and the neighbouring parishes, making, with the man-of-war's men, four hundred in all. It was agreed that the volunteers should proceed by land, while the sailors with the ship's boats, which carried three carriages in addition to the small arms, should row up the loch within hailing distance of them. This was accordingly done; but Rob and his followers, by the time they got to Rowardennan, had left the vicinity, taking the cattle with them, and thus the expedition

failed in its main object. The stolen boats, however, were discovered hidden in the woods at the loch side, and were taken on to the Greenock harbours.

Lady Shaw through the whole affair showed a courage and energy which is well worthy of record even at this distance of time. Her ladyship, as we have stated in a previous number, was a daughter of Sir Hew Dalrymple, President of the Court of Session, and she seems to have inherited a great deal of her father's shrewdness and intrepidity of character. Her sympathies also, like his, were entirely in favour of the Whig or Hanover party, and against the Tories. The Lord President himself had a friendly regard to the interests of Greenock, as we find from correspondence between him and Lady Shaw regarding the proper way of constituting the New or Mid Parish, when the church was about to be erected. On that account, as well as his daughter's connection with the town, we do not deem it out of place to give the following glimpse of the home in which she was trained. The description is by the celebrated Lord Kames, and is referred to in his biography. One winter's evening, Home (afterwards Lord Kames), who was an apprentice with a writer to the signet in Edinburgh, was sent by his master with some papers to the house of the

Lord President. He was shown into the parlour, a very elegant apartment, where a daughter of the President, a beautiful young lady, was performing a piece of music on the harpsichord, while the venerable judge sat by her with his book on the table. The music was suspended, and a short conversation ensued on the business to which the papers related, in which the young man acquitted himself so much to the President's satisfaction as to draw from him a very handsome compliment on his knowledge and proficiency in the law ; the conversation then turned to general topics, and was prolonged with much pleasure, while the young lady made tea, and afterwards, at her father's desire, sung and played some Scotch airs on the harpsichord. The youth was struck with every particular of the scene in which he had borne a part, and his ardent mind, as he was wont to relate, caught instant fire from the impression. "Happy the man," said he to himself, "whose old age, crowned with honour and dignity, can thus repose itself after the useful labours of the day in the bosom of his family amidst all the enjoyments that affluence, justly earned, can command." So deep an impression had this interview upon Mr Home that he resolved to abandon the more limited occupation of a writer and qualify himself for the function of

an advocate before the Supreme Court, and this resolution he carried out with honour and success.

On every occasion in which Lady Shaw came into public view she acted as we should expect one trained in such a home to do. Even when her opinions ran counter to that of the people of Greenock—and they did so on more than one occasion—there was such a desire to improve the amenities of the place that, looking at the subjects in dispute at this distance of time and our present notions of comfort and cleanliness, we cannot pass the same condemnation on her actions as our forefathers did. The following instance will serve as an illustration. The foreign trade of the port had increased considerably, especially with the West Indies, and there was great lack of storage accommodation for the sugar landed in hogsheads. So deficient was it that the Glasgow merchants threatened to take their vessels to Port-Glasgow unless additional provision was made without delay. The managers of the town funds, themselves being cognisant of the necessity for such accommodation, waited on Sir John to ask him to feu ground for that purpose. The place they pointed out as most eligible was where the town cellars were afterwards built at the Bell Entry. He agreed with them as to the suitableness of the position and the

reasonableness of the request, and said he was inclined to feu the same, but would not fix definitely until he returned from Sauchie, where he and Lady Shaw were going on a visit. Being informed of what was intended, Lady Shaw disapproved of the ground chosen, and recommended another site to the east of the Mid Quay. This site was used as a receptacle for all kinds of refuse, and was kept in a very filthy condition, and no doubt her ladyship thought that if the stores were planted there the locality would be properly looked after in future, and the nuisance cease to exist. On his return from Sauchie the managers waited at the Mansionhouse to get Sir John to implement his promise as to the ground, but he was conveniently absent or engaged, and sent Lady Shaw to meet them. She did so, and explained the change of site which was intended, but it did not satisfy the managers, who spoke of it "as a place of nastiness and inconvenience." They could not, however, move her ladyship from the opinion that it was the proper site, and she seems to have told them that if they did not take it they would get none. When the matter was communicated to the people they were even more indignant than the managers, and threatened to discontinue the malt-tax altogether if "they could not get carrying out a design so

manifestly tending to the good of the town." After a time, however, they became more pacified, but still refused to build on the spot referred to, and ultimately Sir John gave way, and the original site fixed on was feued to the town. Lady Shaw's good intentions of getting rid of the place of nastiness were thus defeated, and it was allowed to remain as it was for a number of years, until indeed the breasts of the quays were built.





## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE IX.

In 1718 Greenock was again in jubilation—this time over the marriage of Sir John Shaw's only daughter Marion with Charles, son and heir of Lord Cathcart. It could at that time be said of Greenock, as it was said of Scotland by King James the Fifth when Queen Mary was born, that it "cam wi' a lass and would go wi' a lass." It had come to the Shaw family in the 14th century by the marriage of Shaw of Sauchie with one of the daughters of Malcolm Galbraith, the then proprietor of Greenock, and it left the Shaw family, on the death of him whom we may call the great Sir John, in 1752 through the marriage of Dame Margaret Shaw, his sister, to Houston of Houston, whose daughter Helenor married Stewart of Blackhall and carried the estate to the Stewart family who now hold it. The reason why Marion Shaw was passed over in favour of her aunt Margaret was owing to the terms of the entail. This entail, which was arranged between the great Sir



John and his father at the time of the younger baronet's marriage with Miss Dalrymple, provided that, failing male issue of that marriage, the estate should revert back to the older baronet's family, who had then five sons and one daughter living besides his immediate successor, Sir John himself. In making this arrangement father and son no doubt believed they had taken the utmost precaution against the extinction of the family name, and it is most unlikely that either contemplated for a moment the decease of all the brothers without leaving male issue, or that the succession would ultimately fall to the heirs of Margaret, the only sister. But man proposes and God disposes, for all the brothers died without male issue, and the estate passed to John Shaw Stewart of Blackhall, the grandson of Margaret, who herself, as well as her daughter, Lady Stewart, died before Sir John. The latter, who was an astute gentleman, seeing during his lifetime that the estate was to pass away from his daughter, provided for her and her family by feuing the greater portion of the central part of the town to her husband. The rate of feu-duty was very low, if it was not the lowest allowed by the entail, which is five pence per fall, and power was given to sub-feu at increased rates.

At that time the boundaries of the town

were the river on the north, the policy of the Mansionhouse on the south, the Rue-end at Bogle Street on the east, and a lane which ran up from the west arm of the West Quay, where Charles Street is now, on the west. Within these boundaries the then town was situated, and Sir John included most if not all the unfeued ground from Charles Street on the west to Rue-end on the east, as well as the harbours, in the arrangement. In this way the Cathcart family became connected with Greenock, from which they got their second title, Lord Greenock, the usual designation being Lord Cathcart and Greenock. During the time they were connected with the town the Cathcart family took a great interest in its advancement, and to them the Town Council applied for assistance in all emergencies. To show their appreciation of the services of the ninth Lord, the son of Marion Shaw, the Town Council entertained him to dinner in John M'Laren's Inn, Cross-shore Street, on the 7th April, 1751. They also asked Lord Dromore, who was then on a visit to the Mansion-house. The cost of the dinner was £15 4s 4d. Mainly through the influence of this Lord Cathcart the attempt to make the river Clyde from Dumbuck to Glasgow a canal, and so "kep" the water to the injury of the lower ports, was defeated, for which the Magistrates and Town Council

of Greenock in 1758 tendered him their warmest thanks. On 30th October, 1751, we find the Town Clerk instructed by minute to write him to Edinburgh, where he appears to have lived part of the year, asking him to select gardeners for the purpose of cleansing and deepening the harbours. On receiving the letter he put himself in communication with the Duke of Buccleuch's head gardener, and by his advice selected John Reid, gardener, Leith, and John Guthrie, gardener, Edinburgh, to do the work, which they with their men seem to have executed to the satisfaction of all concerned. In 1753, again, through his influence, Greenock was allowed to have a post-bag of its own, and also a post-master.

One has but to read the old minutes to be satisfied of the influential position Lord Cathcart held, not only as respects Greenock but as respects Glasgow also. For example, in 1756, when the Cumbrae Light-house Bill was introduced to Parliament, the whole representation and power of taxation was sought to be absorbed by Glasgow. Naturally enough, the Greenock Town Council demurred to this, and resolved to oppose it; but before putting the matter into the hands of Mr Spottiswoode, their London agent, Bailies Alexander and Gammill were sent to Glasgow to state the

conditions on which alone they would agree to withdraw their opposition. These were that they should have representation in the Trust, and that a sixth of the surplus rates (if any) should be applied to improve the Greenock harbours. The deputation were specially instructed, should they fail in their negotiations with the Glasgow people, to wait on Lord Cathcart, through whose influence they had no doubt the bill would be rejected unless these concessions were granted to Greenock. The threat seems to have been sufficient for the Glasgow Town Council, as they accepted the proposed terms, which continued in force until the present Trust was constituted a few years ago. Down till the half of this (19th) century had nearly run its course, when the connection was severed by the sale of the property to the Stewarts, the Cathcart family continued their interest in the town. They were at all times willing to use their political influence, which was not small, for its behoof; and the Magistrates and inhabitants generally experienced the utmost courtesy whenever they had occasion to seek their help. During the passing of a Harbour Bill in 1801 the grandson of Marion Shaw wrote as follows to the Chief Magistrate:—"The town of Greenock will always give me great pleasure and confer obligation when its

Magistrates do me the honour to think that any endeavour of mine can be of use to them, and are good enough to afford me an opportunity of showing my regard for them and my zeal for their interests." Such was the family with which Greenock became connected in 1718 by the marriage of Marion Shaw to Charles, who became the eighth Lord Cathcart at the death of his father in 1732. He was commander of the Scots Greys in 1715 at the battle of Sheriffmuir, and it was mainly owing to him that the rebels were defeated.

At this period (1718) there was only four slated houses in Greenock, one of them being the chief inn in the town. It was situated at the conjunction of Shaw (then called the High Street) and Cross-shore Streets, at the north-east side, and, from the date on one of the lintels, appears to have been erected in 1716. In one of the rooms of this inn the Town Managers met on stated occasions to discuss town and harbour business, and to docket the accounts of the treasurer of the malt tax and anchorage dues. This locality was looked on as the centre of the town, very much as Cathcart Square is now, and there the farmers made their marketings and fee'd their servants; and there the fishcurers engaged the Highlanders for the herring fishing, as is still done in the proper season at Wick and other fish-

ing towns. For the convenience of these persons a sun-dial, which served the purpose of a public clock in those days, was erected at the corner of the inn. A little to the eastward was another inn called the Anchor Inn, which was the great resort of the sailors and fishermen, when the pressgang were not in the neighbourhood.

Between Cross-shore Street and the Broad Close, on the south side of Shaw Street, was the jail, a small thatched house, from the front of which the jongs for securing the prisoners were suspended by a chain. On the street in front of the jail was a cross, to make sure that people would not mistake the authorised market place, and in front of the cross on the thoroughfare the date 1669 was formed in white pebbles. From this market-cross the name Cross-shore evidently took its rise, as before the inn was built, in 1716, it literally fronted the shore, the inn being the first house built on the north side of Shaw Street at this spot. The following sentence will give some idea of how the jongs were put to use in Greenock :— John Smith, a vagrant, being brought before the Court for stealing candles out of the shop of David Smith, candlemaker, declares and acknowledges his guilt. The Bailie having duly considered his judicial acknowledgment of the offence, ordains the said John Smith

to be carried from the bar of the Court and put into the joughs, there to stand bareheaded for the space of half-an-hour with some of the candles hung about his neck, and a libel upon his breast with the following words upon it in large characters:—"Here I stand for stealing candles." After his stance in the joughs he was to be drummed out of the town, and thereafter banished from the same for life, with the usual certification.

In the beginning of the 18th century the number of poor in Greenock was small, and the funds required for their support were chiefly met by the church-door collections. They were, however, supplemented to some extent by donations from various sources, especially from seamen returning from voyages in which they had been in peril and who desired to express their thankfulness to God for His special care of them by devoting part of their wages for the use of the poor. Many instances of this kind are recorded in the minute books of the kirk-session, of which the following is an example:—"The session convened, *pro re nata*, James Galbreath, skipper, and Archibald Yuill, his mate, being present informed the session that they and the ship's company having been in imminent danger on the 6th February last (1706) made a free-will offering of nine pounds sterling to be disposed of for behoof of the poor of the parish, and hav-

ing produced the foresaid sum did desire the same to be distributed accordingly. The session, having commended them for their piety towards God and their charitable disposition to the poor, did receive the foresaid sum, and promised to distribute same to the poor, according to their necessities." As the town increased the number of poor also increased, and to the church-door collections were added the sums collected by trades-boxes, which were instituted for the purpose, and by grants from the Marine Society. By and by these became insufficient, and the inhabitants in 1785 held a meeting in the kirk at which they agreed to impose a voluntary assessment upon themselves to supply the deficiency. This they did, and the Superior contributed his quota like the others. The rate he paid was one per cent. on his net income from the town, which about the end of last century and the beginning of the present seems to have been about £8,300 a year, as his share of the rate amounted to £83 7s. In 1791 the amount raised by the voluntary assessment was £360, which, with the church-door collections and other funds referred to, seems to have met the requirements of the year.

It would have been better in many respects had sufficient provision continued to be made throughout Scotland for the support of the poor



without the introduction of a poor law; but the immigration from Ireland, and the divisions which sprung up in the churches, rendered it at the time a necessity. Probably there will always be more or less need of State provision for certain classes of poor, but if the Churches were united, and "cared for the poor in accordance with Christian principles," and if the ruinous pauper-making drinking customs were decreased or abolished, a very small State provision would be required. Dr Chalmers' territorial system of poor relief, worked by congregational districts, could, with a united Church, meet the great mass of pauperism in a way far more conducive to the interests of the individual and the community, morally and physically, than the poor-law system, which, notwithstanding the hard conditions usually imposed, tends to increase and perpetuate instead of diminishing the evil. To attain such a desideratum it cannot but be the desire of all patriotic Scotchmen that such a consummation as the union of at least the Presbyterian Churches should take place, although it may have to be preceded by disestablishment. Christian and moral influence, as well as material aid, could through congregations be brought to bear more directly upon the poor, and would operate more effectively towards uprooting the disease than any mere rate-distributing machinery can do

which deals with the effects rather than with the causes of pauperism.

While, owing to the circumstances referred to already, there was undoubtedly a necessity for a poor law, it was never intended that the means of the ratepayers should be wasted on extravagant buildings. The demonstration in Greenock on the 12th September, 1876, in connection with laying the foundation-stone of the Poorhouse, the princely style of the buildings, and the proposed commemoration mantelpiece, seem altogether out of keeping with the hollowness and misery which is behind—the drunkenness, the vice, the heartless neglect of parents, which manufacture our paupers and blot our Christianity. The promoters who began by telling the public that the new buildings would cost about £40,000, and finished by making it £100,000, are certainly entitled to remembrance, but not in an oaken mantelpiece; and unless the present administrators of the poor law in Greenock wish to serve themselves responsible for the folly and extravagance of these individuals, they will be wise to let the subject drop into eternal oblivion, as the proposed commemoration could not be otherwise described than in the pithy and pregnant words of the sacred writer, “a glorying in their shame.”

It is well known that Greenock has continued to adhere to the means and substance system of rating for the poor as being more just and equitable than the rental system. Some of our richer citizens have occasionally kicked against it as inquisitorial and inconvenient, but the general body of the people have always held that a good system should not be superseded merely because it is troublesome, that an unequal and unjust system may be put in its place. Both the divine and the natural law unite in placing the burden of supporting the poor on those who are able to do so in proportion to their means, and the poor-law of this country has in the main pointed in the same direction. It must therefore be obvious that an assessment on means and substance is a much better mode of getting at the true amount an individual should contribute than a rental system, for it often happens that while shopkeepers and others pay large rents quite out of proportion to their income, merchants and shipowners realising large incomes pay small rents in quite a reverse proportion. The means and substance mode has, therefore, been favoured here; and while most places have been badgered by the richer classes into making a change to rating on rental, Greenock has stuck faithfully and persistently to the plan it had adopted by its

voluntary assessment, even before the poor-law came into existence.

No doubt inequalities in assessing may take place occasionally from want of knowledge on the part of the Assessment Committee, but if a mistake is made one year new members may come in the following who are better informed and set the matter right. Early in the century one of those rich men who kicked against the mode of assessment refused to pay his poor rates on the ground that he was charged a greater amount in proportion to his income than others whom he believed to be as well able to pay as himself. This gentleman was James Gammill, banker in Greenock, son of old Bailie Gammill, who first feued Garvel estate, and after whom it was long called Bailie Gammill's Point. He was a large shareholder in the Greenock Bank and the manager, and was also proprietor of the estate of Countess-wells, in Aberdeenshire. An action was duly raised against him by the Committee of Management for behoof of the poor, which ultimately came before the Court of Session, where it was held by the judges that if an assessment committee acted in *bona fides* and to the best of their knowledge and judgment in imposing the assessments no one could challenge the same as respects other individuals, although they

might do so as respected themselves. As Mr Gammill could not show mala-fides on the part of the assessment committee, and as he did not deny that his own assessment *per se* was right enough, but only found fault with its amount as compared with the amount charged to others, his defences were repelled, and he was adjudged to pay the poor rates charged and the expenses of the action. As has already been stated, the poor-law follows in the main the divine and natural law which throws the burden of supporting the poor on individuals according to their means, but there is a glaring exception which cannot be passed without notice. That is the exemption of feu-duties and feu-rents from the burden of rating. These duties are liable for income tax, but as yet, owing to the power of the landed interest in the Houses of Parliament, they have escaped rating for the poor and local taxation generally. It seems quite scandalous that incomes of £30,000 or £40,000 a year should thus be exempted, and continued agitation should be made till Parliament is shamed into putting an end to the indefensible anomaly.





## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE X.

On 28th November, 1727, at the first Parliament called on the accession of George the Second, Sir John Shaw was again elected unopposed to represent the shire of Renfrew. He had been a member previously from 1708 to 1710. In those days the trouble and inconvenience of such a position were taken into account as well as the honour, and the expenses connected with the election and travelling to London were usually paid by the county—a much more sensible way of doing than is practised now, when the candidates themselves are obliged to pay, and in default of any of them doing so the unfortunate Sheriff for the county is obliged to bear the expense himself, for which, however, we should think he has a strong claim on the Exchequer. The true remedy for such cases is to place the official charges for polling sheriffs, booths, &c., on the rates, as is done at elections to the town council and police commission, as any course

which would put difficulties in the way of individuals becoming candidates would be a greater evil than the one requiring remedy.

About the year 1727 travelling in England was very unsafe from the badness of the roads and the numerous footpads and highwaymen who infested the country. An impartial historian thus writes as to the state of matters in 1730 :—" England is infested with robbers, assassins, and incendiaries, the natural consequence of degeneracy, corruption, and the want of police. These characters are now become more desperate and savage than ever they were since mankind was civilized. In the exercise of their rapine they wounded, maimed, and even murdered the unhappy sufferers through a wantonness of barbarity. They circulated letters demanding sums of money from individuals on pain of reducing their houses to ashes and their families to ruin, and even set fire to the house of a rich merchant in Bristol who had refused to comply with their demand." Such was the state of the country when this election at the succession of King George took place, and it was therefore customary for a number of the Scotch members to travel to London in company, and some amusing stories are told of their adventures. To show Sir John's force of character the following anecdotes may be related:—" Having arrived

along with several other Scotch members at an inn in Yorkshire famous for its bacon, a waiter came in to ask what they would have for dinner. 'Do you eat pork?' he asked of one of Sir John's honourable friends. The independent and worthy member to whom the question was put abominated pork as much as he did State corruption—it was then the days of Sir Robert Walpole—but like many other members of a certain assembly, bamboozled by plausible chicanery, he said 'aye' when he should have said 'no.' The waiter went round the company, who followed each other like a flock of sheep, and the ayes were likely to have proved unanimous till he inquired of Sir John if he would eat pork. 'No, I'll be ——— if I do,' said he, evidently enraged at the sheepishness of his fellow travellers. 'I'll no tak' pork neither,' quoth he that first said aye; 'nor me,' said the next, 'nor me,' 'nor me,' said all the others, and so the pork was discarded."

On another occasion, returning from London accompanied by two friends, they entered an inn for dinner, and there being a company of young English bucks in the public room, they got a private room to themselves. The company in the public room were anxious to know who the strangers were, and having ascertained that they were Scotchmen, immediately resolved



to have a rise out of the Scotch Sawnies, as they called them ; and one of them having a gold cane, sent the waiter to ask if "anything like that grew in their poor country." Sir John immediately fired up at the intended affront, and taking the cane from the waiter said he would answer the question personally. Loading his pistol, he went into the company, which was somewhat numerous, and pointing it at the head of the first, he asked in a decided manner, "Is that your cane, sir?" "No," he answered. He then went round each of the company in the same way, but they all denied the ownership. Turning to the waiter, he said, "It was very strange that the cane had no owner, but since that was the case he would take it home and plant it in Scotland, and he would see how it grew." The jokers had the joke thus turned on themselves, and Sir John stood true to his country's motto—*Nemo me impune lacessit*—no one shall touch me with impunity.

In 1728 we have the first published return of the amount of customs paid at the port of Greenock. It was £15,231 4s 4d—a goodly sum in those days. The herring trade continued, also, to increase, and during the fishing season no fewer than 900 boats were engaged on the Clyde, of which about half belonged to Greenock ; the rest were from other places, but were hired by the Greenock

herring-curers. These boats were now larger than formerly, and carried from 20 to 24 nets each and four men. The trade in cured herrings with the Continent was carried on briskly, about 1,900 lasts being exported yearly. In a report furnished Lord Cathcart for reference in Parliament we find it stated — "That the herring trade to a great extent is carried on at Greenock, from whence they are not only exported but the returns thereof centres all at this port, and besides the returns for the herrings, which is for the most part in iron and deals (Scotland had few or no iron works in those days) there are considerable quantities of these commodities imported from Gottenburg or elsewhere. The importations of timber and deals from Norway is very noticeable, and salt from France, Spain, and Portugal is no less so, and from the whole the revenue of the Customs at Greenock through the year must be something considerable."

The trade with America was also carried on briskly, and we find the Greenock merchants joining with those of London, Liverpool, Bristol, and Glasgow in complaining of the depredations of the Spaniards in South America who had seized several of their vessels, notwithstanding the Treaty of Seville, by which the disputes between Spain and Britain had been settled.

In their complaint they state that ever since the treaty of Seville the Spaniards in America had almost incessantly insulted and distressed the commerce of Great Britain. They disputed the right of British traders to cut logwood in the Bay of Campeachy and gather salt in the Island of Tortugas, though that right was acknowledged by implication in all the treaties which had been lately concluded between the two nations. The captains of the armed vessels, known by the name of *garda-costa*, had made a practice of boarding and plundering British ships on pretence of searching for contraband commodities, on which occasions they had behaved with the utmost insolence, cruelty, and rapine. They had seized and detained British vessels, imprisoned their crews, and confiscated their cargoes, in violation of treaties, and in defiance of common justice and humanity. It is quite possible that some of the vessels seized had been engaged in carrying contraband cargoes from the British-American to the Spanish-American colonies, but that was not a justification of the cruelties practised in breach of treaty, nor of boarding and detaining vessels and crews who were quite free from such a charge.

Matters were brought to a crisis by the seizure of a Greenock vessel and the committal of an outrage on the captain. This

vessel was one of the regular Jamaica traders, and was commanded by Captain Jenkins. While in the Gulf of Mexico on his way home he was boarded by the captain and crew of a Spanish guarda-costa, who rummaged the vessel for contraband articles, but finding none, insulted the captain with the most opprobrious invectives. "They tore off one of his ears and, throwing it at him, bade him carry it to his King and tell him they would serve him in the same manner should an opportunity offer. They tortured him most cruelly, and threatened him with death." This man was examined at the bar of the House of Commons; and being asked by a member what he thought when he found himself in the hands of such barbarians, the answer was well worthy a Scotch shipmaster—"I recommended my soul to God, and my cause to my country." The behaviour of the brave seaman, the sight of his ear (which was produced), and the account of the indignities which had been offered to the nation and sovereign of Great Britain filled the house with indignation. Letters of marque and reprisals were granted against the Spaniards, the troops were augmented, and a fleet was despatched to the Spanish Main, who bombarded and destroyed Porto Bello and several places of importance, besides capturing several rich galleons. Lord Cathcart, Sir John's son-

in-law, who was a commander in the British army, and a very gallant officer, was despatched with an army to attack the Spanish West Indies. The fleet which conveyed the troops and stores consisted of 170 vessels, but they were scattered, and several were lost by a storm in the Bay of Biscay. The remainder reached Dominica, and here they met with a greater loss in the death of the commander of the expedition, Lord Cathcart, who was carried off by dysentery. He left one son, Charles, ninth Lord Cathcart, who came of age and succeeded his father in 1740, and two daughters. Captain Jenkins was afterwards employed in the service of the East India Company and approved himself worthy of his appointment; for, being attacked by the pirate Angria, he fought a long and desperate engagement with courage and skill, and ultimately beat him off and saved his own ship with three others that were under his convoy.

In 1725 a rope and sailcloth factory was established by Bailie Robert Donald; and in 1736 one of the Messrs Laird, who were carrying on the same kind of trade in Port-Glasgow, opened a branch in Greenock, and afterwards took over Mr Donald's business. Laird Street in Greenock was called after this Mr Laird, who lived in the house at Ropework Quay, which was

sometime used as a cholera hospital, and was taken down when opening the street to Albert Harbour. He was the grandfather of the late John Laird, shipbuilder, and M.P. for Birkenhead, who was born in the same house in the first year of the century. The population increased in proportion to the commercial prosperity, and we find that in 1735 it was 4,100, being more than double what it was at the poll-tax enumeration in 1696. The following are particulars of the census :—

In the town itself above 8 years of age,	-	2433
Do. under do.	-	650
Landward parish (Sir John's tenants)		
above 8 years of age,	-	316
Landward parish (Sir John's tenants)		
under 8 years of age,	-	72
Cartsdyke (town and landward) above 8		
years of age,	-	500
Cartsdyke (town and landward) under 8		
years of age,	-	129
		<hr/>
		4100

The census was taken by instruction of the Presbytery, the reason being that an application had been made for an additional church, for which there seems to have been great necessity, there being only the one. In pre-Reformation times the district was much better supplied, there being then, it is believed, no fewer than three in existence—one in the East-end at Chapelton, from which the

farm of Chapelton is believed to have derived its name. When the late Mr King, father of Mr Thomas King, writer, took in some ground to form a garden in connection with his house at Brigend a number of gravestones were found within a foot of the surface, which may be considered a further confirmation of the tradition, as graveyards were commonly associated with chapels or places of worship, being holy ground. Holyrood, Edinburgh, is a familiar example. Another chapel is believed to have existed about Virginia Street, as when digging the foundation of a house for Bailie Roger Stewart at the east corner of that street in the end of last century a number of gravestones and bones were found, corroborating the tradition that on this site stood the chapel of St Lawrence, from which the Bay of St Lawrence, now Cartdyke Bay, is said to have derived its name. At Kilblain (now Kilblain Street) on the west the chapel of St Blane is said to have stood; and where George Square is situated, with its many churches and houses, there was in 1740 and for sometime thereafter a croft or small farm steading on which was erected a windmill, which in consequence was then and for many years afterwards called the Windmill Croft. Subsequent to the census a mission house was opened in a loft in the Royal Closs, which was used as a preaching

station until the Mid Parish Church was erected in 1758. This church was mainly built and endowed from the proceeds of the malt tax, and there was a good deal of delay and disputing between Sir John and the managers of the town funds before liberty was given to erect the church. The church in fact was not erected until after Sir John's death, when the feu was given off by his grandson, Lord Cathcart.







## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XI.

In 1734 a survey was made of the river Clyde, and a map executed showing the soundings and the positions of its various harbours and jetties. This work was done by a Greenock man, John Watt, senr., the uncle of the famous engineer, and in it the Greenock harbours, as they appeared at that date, are very distinctly marked. We came across this gentleman (the surveyor) before in connection with the Baron Bailie Court in Crawforddyke, of which he acted as Clerk for a time, while his father, Mr Thomas Watt, mathematician, was the Bailie. Having given up this office, he removed to Glasgow, and commenced business as a surveyor and mathematician, but he died young in 1737, and the map, although prepared in 1734, was not published until 1759. This map, a copy of which is in the Watt Library, is most valuable as marking the changes that have taken place in the bed of the river in the last hundred and fifty years. If the Harbour Trustees

have not a copy already it would be advisable to get one made on a large scale to keep in the engineer's office for reference and comparison with the soundings of the present day. The Committee of the Watt Institution would no doubt, if asked, at once grant liberty to make such a copy. All the members of the Watt family seem to have been of a more or less scientific turn of mind. John Watt, junior, the younger and only brother of James Watt, acted as editor and publisher of his uncle's map after the latter's death; and James, junior, sold them at his shop in the College of Glasgow, after he had removed from Greenock. The following is a copy of the advertisement as it appears in the *Glasgow Courant* of October, 1759:—

Just published,

And to be sold by James Watt, at his shop in the  
College of Glasgow, price 2s 6d,

A Large Map of the River Clyde from Glasgow  
to Portincross, from an actual survey.

To which is added

A Draught of Part of the North Channel, with  
the Firth of Clyde, according to the best authorities.

In writing anything connected with the harbours of Greenock, we cannot avoid referring to the Inventor of the Steam Engine, who was born here in the year 1736. Although no doubt his history is well known to the

older generation—many biographies of him having been written, the most complete of which (at least in the earlier days of his career) are the Memorials of Watt, by our esteemed townsman the late George Williamson, burgh and county fiscal—it would not be amiss for the sake of the younger generation to give a brief sketch of it anew. Before doing so, however, it may be proper to say something regarding the rise and progress of Cartsdyke, with which his family were connected, and where his grandfather settled when he came from Aberdeenshire, and for long carried on the profession of a teacher of mathematics and navigation, and where his father—called James Watt, senior, to distinguish him from his more illustrious son—was born. When Thomas Watt was induced to take up his residence there in the middle of the 17th century, Cartsdyke must have been of some importance as a shipping port. The dyke or quay which ran out into the bay, something like the first quay at Greenock, must have bulked largely in the eyes of the inhabitants when it gave name to the burgh, Cartsdyke being a mere abbreviation of Crawford's dyke; or the dyke of Crawford the Laird. It was formed into a burgh of barony, with the privilege of a weekly fair, in 1636, the very year after the charter was granted in favour of Greenock, manifesting

the rivalry which then existed, and which could not brook that its neighbour Greenock should have privileges it did not equally possess. The Greenock and Cartdyke of those days were greatly indebted for their progress and rapid advancement to the residence in their midst of the proprietors. Absenteeism had not then become so fashionable as it is now, and the lairds, who spent a great part of their time on their estates, were continually devising means for improving the same. This was specially noticeable in the case of Greenock, and at that date (1636) it was so also at Crawfurdsdyke. The family of Crawford, the proprietors of this burgh, are a branch of the Crawfurds of Kilbirnie and Jordanhill. About the time of the Revolution the then Crawford of Crawfurdsdyke was on the side of the Government, while the Sir John Shaw of that date favoured the Covenanters and afterwards William of Orange. In consequence Crawford was appointed one of the commissioners for taking the test oath for Renfrewshire, while Sir John Shaw fell into disfavour with the Court, and, along with other sixteen persons, was brought before the Justiciary for treason, rebellion, and doing favour to the rebels. His offence consisted in having concealed and helped many of the Covenanters who had been at Bothwell Brig, or had defeated the

troops of Claverhouse at Drumclog. At the time of Argyll's invasion, which was two years before the landing of King William, Crawford was Quartermaster of a troop stationed at Greenock. When the ships containing the Duke's army anchored off Greenock, and landed some men to secure provisions of which they were scarce, Crawford ordered his troops to fire on them, which they did, and then retreated to the hill near where the Cemetery is now situated. In return the ships fired on them, and when forming the Cemetery in 1845 a swivel shot was found, similar to the kind in use at that period, which is believed to have been fired from Argyll's fleet.

The charter making Cartsdyke a burgh of barony was granted by Charles II. in favour of Thomas Crawford of Crawforddsyke, who then lived in Cartsburn House, which, an old chronicler says, was beautifully situated on a rising slope above the bay, and was well planted all round with trees; the tenants and feuars, who were "mostly seamen and mechanics," having their houses some distance from the "messuage," or mansion-house, close to the shore. Somewhat later, about 1710, Hamilton of Wishaw describes Crawforddsyke as possessing a very convenient harbour for vessels, and the town as being mostly feued to merchants, seamen, or

loading men. In the poll-tax roll, made up in 1696, we find a number of skippers, sailors, and coopers, showing that the herring trade was a considerable branch of the business carried on there. John Spreule, at the date of the poll-tax and for long after, had also his red herring manufactory there; and in 1752 a whale fishing station was established at Cappielow near Garvel point. Dutch whalers were encouraged to settle and the remains of Dutch yares, discovered on the beach near Garvel Point, then called Garvald Point, some years ago, testify that their system of whaling was the one adopted. Several expeditions were fitted out from Cartdyke for the Greenland seas, as many as four vessels being despatched in one year, but the success met with does not seem to have been sufficient to encourage the continuance of the trade, as about the year 1788 it was abandoned altogether. It will be in the remembrance, however, of some of the older inhabitants that at more than one gateway in town whale's jawbones were set up as pillars; but they may not have known so well that these were the last relics of the whale fishing of Cartdyke. Up until Port-Glasgow was feued by the Glasgow Corporation, and their trade fixed there, the bay of Cartdyke seems to have been a favourite place for unloading the cargoes and tran-

shipping them into small flats or boats to be taken up the river. The rise of Port-Glasgow acted severely on the trade of Cartsdyke, and in 1780 William Semple writes that very little alteration has taken place in it since the beginning of the century, 80 years previously, "the town being built after the ancient form of one street fronting the shore, and having 88 houses in all, one-half, or 44, with outside stairs up to the second storey."

In those days there was some distance between Greenock and Cartsdyke, with two considerable burns—Daling burn and Crawford's burn—to cross; and a frequent entry in the older Town Council minute books is that the clerk be instructed to arrange with the bailie of Cartsdyke for sending its proportion of men and horses to assist in repairing the road and breast work along the shore between the two burghs. As we have seen in a previous number, the eastern boundary proper of Greenock was at Bogle Street, it being near that point where the row of thatched houses stopped which gave the name Row-end to the street. The Town Council, however, by arrangement, and for mutual convenience, paid the greater part of the cost of maintaining the roadway to Cartsdyke, that burgh providing a certain number of men to assist in the work.

From the point where Palmerston Buildings

stand, which then jutted out a considerable way, the bay of St Lawrence took a rapid bend landwards to about the conjunction of Cathcart and Rue-end Streets. It then turned eastwards along what is now the centre of Rue-end and Main Street, until it reached Garvel Point, where it terminated. A few years ago when the street was opened for laying the main pipes to the new Gasworks at Inchgreen, the large stones of the old breastwork protecting the road were found to run along the centre of the street. At the cooperage on the north side of Rue-end Street, close to Cathcart Street, so long held by our old and respected townsman, Mr Dugald Gray, between whom and his uncle, Mr Donald Gray, the same premises were occupied for upwards of a century, the breastwork took a bend outwards until it reached the front of the town cellars, round which the Town Council had built an embankment 24 feet wide to give access from the harbour on the west to the bay on the east side of the cellars. This embankment extended to the centre of what is now known as Customhouse Place, and the tide usually flowed when full to within a few inches of its surface, and with a heavy easterly gale it was almost impassable—as some of our older citizens still remember. At the time of erecting the Customhouse the





## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XII.

In Cartsdyke Thomas Watt set up as a teacher of mathematics and navigation, the number of seafaring men there giving him a good field for his profession. He appears, on the whole, to have been pretty successful, as he speedily became the proprietor of a dwelling-house, in part of which he resided himself and part he let to a customhouse officer, described in the roll (dated 1712) of tenants and feuars in the barony as a waiter. Very likely his house was one of the forty-four that had two storeys with an outside stair giving access to the upper flat, as these houses seem all to have been occupied by the beinest (*Scotice* for best off) inhabitants. Besides the house in Cartsdyke he was able to purchase another in the town of Greenock, situated on the west side of the Open Shore, where Mr John Low has his office and store at present. Mr Watt was evidently a man of considerable mental vigour and capacity, and he was chosen by Mr Crawford of Cartsburn, the

superior, as Baron Bailie for the burgh. His second recorded decision in that office is dated November, 1696, and bears on civil rather than criminal business. It ordains that money be raised for repairing the church loft in the west aisle, which had been allocated to the people of Cartsdyke; for building the bridge wider; for furnishing new heads to the drum and dressing thereof; and for paying James Galbreath, skipper, for the "pouter" furnished by him to the town in December, 1688. A stent or cess was by this order laid on the whole vassals and tenants of the town to meet the cost of these improvements, and the mortcloth money in the hands of Mr Taylor, the treasurer, was also appropriated to the same purpose. The drum in those days was an instrument of great importance, and was used for various purposes—sometimes to raise the war spirit of the people, at other times as the signal of authority and law, and at other times it fulfilled the function which the advertising columns of a newspaper do at the present day. Particular care was taken of it, as may be seen from some of the burgh accounts still in existence. In 1715, at the time of the rebellion, there is a sum charged against the county in the militia account by the town of Cartsdyke for "a gun, sword, belt, and the outrig and wages of John M'Glashan, militiaman; and

for keeping guard, coal, and candle, and the regular peel and dressing of the drum."

Besides acting as a magistrate and mathematician, the Baron Bailie of Cartsdyke had many other duties to perform. He collected the Government cess, the minister's stipend, the voluntary assessment for the poor, and the funds for repairing the kirk, the bridge, and the clock. He also adjusted the weights and measures, and had standards erected close to his house for public use, a person named Robert Smith having charge of them. This house was at the corner of Main Street, and the Stanners on the east side; and it is generally believed that the name Stanners was given to the street because the standards were there, the word stanners being simply a corruption of standards. The old house was taken down and rebuilt many years ago. It now belongs to Mr John G. Macfarlane, a Greenock gentleman who resides in the vicinity of London. It is a remarkable fact that the ancestors of the gentleman holding the adjacent tenement on the east feued that ground eight years before Mr Watt acquired the said property, the latter having acquired in 1691, while the former acquired in 1683. Mr George Hutcheson, whose name is a household word in Cartsdyke, is the individual who holds the feu taken off by his maternal ancestor at that period.

Cartadyke was then in advance of Greenock in respect of a public clock, a regular assessment being laid on the inhabitants for maintaining a clock and a bell for public behoof. The house on the outside of which it was placed was the one situated to the west, and adjoining Messrs J. M'Lean & Co.'s saw mill in Main Street, which was long known as the Knockhouse (*Scotice* for clock house); and here, in the days of Thomas Watt, justice was administered, the joughs for the punishment of offenders being attached to a thatched house at the quayhead. In November, 1697, a complaint was made to the bailie that some young people had been committing depredations in kailyards on Hallowe'en night, and sitting in judgment he issued the following order thereanent:—"It being complained that several young ones do upon that night called Halloween abuse several yards in drawing of kail. Therefore, it is statute and ordained in all time coming that none on any pretext at any time or night hereafter draw any kail out of any yard, or yet cut them, without *liberty from the owner*, under the pain of forty shillings Scots *toties quoties*." This judgment was most judicious, for while it did nothing to hinder the fullest enjoyment of fun and frolic, it put the proper limit on intromission with a neighbour's property, though it should only be in the "drawing of

kail," to wit, that the consent of the owner be first obtained. To allow individuals to deal with kail stocks or other property without the *owner's consent*, would be a dangerous principle, unless it could be certified that all are equally discreet and conscientious—in fact a great deal better than the ruck of those who have intromitted with garden produce since Adam was expelled from Eden. In 1697 nearly every house in Cartsdyke had a garden or kail-yard attached to it, and as there was but little smoke save from the household fire, the aspect of the place must have been very different from what it is when surrounded with shipbuilding yards, engineering works, and saw-mills. The pulling of stocks on Hallowe'en night has now fallen very much into desuetude, but in Burns's time, nearly a hundred years later than the decision referred to, it was still in full swing. The following verses written on the subject by the national poet give a pretty good idea of the custom as it then existed :—

“Then, first an' foremost, thro' the kail,  
 Their stocks maun a' be sought ance;  
 They steek their een, an' graip an' wale,  
 For muckle anes, an' straught anes.  
 Poor hav'rel Will fell aff the drift,  
 An' wander'd thro' the Bow-kail,  
 An' pou't, for want o' better shift,  
 A runt was like a sow-tail  
 Sae bow't that night.

Then, straught or crooked, yird or nane,  
 They roar an' cry a' throu'ther ;  
 The very wee-things, toddlin, rin,  
 Wi' stocks out owre their shouter :  
 An' gif the custock's sweet or sour,  
 Wi' joctelegs they taste them ;  
 Syne coziely, aboon the door,  
 Wi' cannie care, they've plac'd them  
 To lye that night."

The other week (6th August, 1878) the Medical Officer of Health came down heavily on the annual fairs held in July, and urged their discontinuance, as a nuisance. In his report to the Public Health Committee he says :—

"I have a strong suspicion, from the closeness of the dates and the great distance of the localities from each other, that the infection has been introduced by some wandering tramp or other during the Fair holidays. There can be no doubt that a great amount of infectious disease is propagated at these times by the crowds of beggars and vagrants of every description who infest the lower parts of the town and the places where the inhabitants chiefly congregate. As a remedy he recommends the Magistrates not to allow any sentimental notions about the so-called 'good old times' to make them mistake about sweeping away an institution which, though useful when the country was sparsely populated, is, in the present state of civilization, not only uncalled for, but a source of danger both in regard to disease and in regard to crime."

In condemning the Fair, the Medical Officer is only following the example set him in 1696

by no less a body than the Kirk Session of the parish of Greenock, who then passed equally severe strictures on the wandering vagrants and showmen who resorted to the town, although the reasons for so doing were somewhat different:

“The minister informed the session that the mountebanks had come to the place and erected a stage for a stage play, and he proposed they should fall on some effectual method of suppressing the same. The session, considering the thing to be unlawful and inductive of much sin and looseness, appointed some of their members, to wit James Crawford, John Clerk, and Thomas Watt, to go to the Doctor (the head of the mountebanks) in name of the session, and discharge him to use rope-dancing, and men simulating themselves fools, or women exposing themselves in a public manner by dancing on the stage, or any indecent behaviour; allowing him only to expose his drugs or medicines to public sale.”

The quack or doctor here referred to was probably Doctor James Michael Philo, as one of that name travelled in Scotland about the period referred to. Previous to him there was another called Doctor Pontius, to whom Spalding refers—“There came to Aberdeen ane Doctor Pontius, who had some stage plays, whilk drew the people to behold the sport; syne upon the stage sold certain balms, oils, and other physical ointments, whereof he made great gain. Thereafter he

went to other burghs and did the like." It will be observed that Thomas Watt was one of the elders to whom was remitted the duty of dealing with the doctor and his mountebanks; and no doubt supported, as the session usually were, by "Greenock's and Cartsburn's officers," representing the civil magistrate, the dealing with the wandering stage players would be most effectual. The Session also took concern as to the carrying out of an Act passed in the reign of King James I. of Scotland. As it appears to have done much good it seems a pity it was ever repealed. The following is one of the clauses :—"Item, it is ordained that no man in the burgh be found in taverns of wine, ale, or beer after the strike of nine hours and the bell that shall be then rung in the said burgh, and whoever is found therein after said hour the bailies shall put them in the king's prison, or they shall be made to pay forty shillings for each time they so offend."

On January 28, 1699, James Watt, the father of the engineer, was born, and in February, 1734—two years before his grandson was born—the old mathematician departed this life at the advanced age of 92, and his wife, Margaret Sherrer, a year after, aged 84. They are buried in the West Kirkyard, and a flat tombstone covers the grave where they lie. It is situated a little to the north of the



west entrance to the kirk, and has the following inscription on the tombstone :—

T. W.

M. S.

This is the Burial Place of

Thomas Watt,

Professor of the Mathematicks

In Crawforddyke ;

His Wife and Children.

1701.

Names.	Age.			Time of Death.
	Y.	M.	D.	
Margt.	0	11	6,	Oct., 1683.
Catherine,	0	0	10,	Decr.
Thomas,	2	4	4,	Feby., 1687.
Doritie,	18	5	20,	Augt., 1709.

Thomas Watt died

Feb. 28, 1734, aged 92.

Margaret Sherrer, his spouse,

Died March 21, 1735,

Aged 84.

Lived in marriage 55 years.

Thoms Crawford, who was Laird of Cartsburn at the time of Mr Watt's bailieship, took an interest in all that helped to promote the progress of the burgh. He often sat on the bench and administered justice, sometimes with and sometimes without the presence of the Baron Bailie. He was also an elder of the Kirk,

having been admitted to that office in the parish of Greenock, on 5th November, 1694, as the kirk session records bear:—

“Which day Cartsburn, younger, now residing in this parish, being desired to sit in session as an elder, he having been in that station elsewhere, condescended, and was chosen ruling elder to attend the Presbyterial diets till the next ensuing Synod inclusive.”

Mr Crawford took his share in the ordinary business of the session, and by minute of 4th April, 1695, he was appointed, along with the minister, Thomas Watt, and others, to draw up an Act to prevent the great “abuse arising from light-waks (similar to the Irish wake) and keeping banquets on the Sabbath.” He was also appointed, along with the minister and John Clerk, to go to Mary Bannatyne and her family, who were represented as guilty of unchristian carriage and behaviour, “by cursing, swearing, and scolding,” and to exhort them to “live more soberly and Christianly, and advertise them, if they forbear not, they will be taken notice of.” He succeeded to the estate in 1695, his father having died in that year.

His grandson—another Thomas Crawford, that being the most frequent family name—was a correspondent of Burns, as we find from the published correspondence of the poet. This Cartsburn seems to have been a man of

open-hearted, genial nature, and literary tastes, as the following letter show:—

Cartsburn, 18th March, 1788.

My dear Sir—For congeniality of mind entitles me to the freedom of this appellation, and never did I use it with more cordial sincerity—through the medium of our mutual friend Brown I hazard inviting you to the participation of an agreeable rural retirement at a convenient distance from a town where there are many of your admirers (but, indeed, it is not distinguished from that by any town in Great Britain); a library I hope not ill chosen; a cellar not ill stored; a hearty cock of a landlord, whom his perhaps too partial friends regard as destitute neither of taste nor letters. He has reached his eighth lustre untrammelled by the matrimonial chain; and, having neither wife nor child to disturb his tranquility or divide his affections, he can offer you a whole heart. Halt! this is going too far; he is not so forlorn a wretch as to be without a friend; but this does not hinder his having a very warm place in that same heart (for though the fellow's person be little his heart is large) most cordially at your services! How do you like the bill of fare? Not amiss, provided it be not a vapouring sign to a wretched ale-house. Good wine needs no "bush." Well-come (I must pun) and *welcome*; and I hope you will find it deficient neither in spirit nor flavour; but this sage reflection of yours prevents my proceeding to raise your expectations too high. This much I will, however, in justice to myself, add, namely, that if you should be disappointed, I shall be much more so. Shall I then be blest with your society? Answer me, my dear boy!

But I forget myself; you are no classic — no Latin one, I mean, though certainly to be *classed*

(allow me a jingle) among the first Caledonian classics. Tell me where you are. God knows I would gladly come for you in person ; but as this is not in my power, will you allow me to send a servant and a horse for you ! Do, my dear Burns, and bless me with your assent. — Your hearty friend,

T. CRAWFURD.

Unfortunately Burns's reply, if he sent one, is not published, but in a letter dated "Glasgow, 26th March, 1788," to "our mutual friend Brown" (Mr Richard Brown, Irvine), Burns alludes to the above letter in the following appropriate terms:—"I have to thank you for the ingenious, friendly, and elegant epistle from your friend Mr Crawford. I shall certainly write to him ; but not now."

The above remarks called out the following notices of Mr Brown from correspondents in Port-Glasgow to the Editor of the *Greenock Telegraph*:—

Sir,—Your articles on "Our Harbours" have proved deeply interesting to me, and, I know, to many others. That of Saturday last was not less attractive than any of the preceding numbers, all the more that there occurred in it a name which I have long been familiar with. You are perhaps not aware that the "mutual friend" of whom Burns wrote (Mr Richard Brown, Irvine) was at one time resident in Port-Glasgow. He lived in Bay Street in a house where that now occupied by Mr David Gordon stands. I have good reason to believe that Burns and his wife visited Richard Brown there,

staying over night with the "mutual friend." I am aware that Richard Brown's son Alexander is better remembered by the older inhabitants here, and more than one of his pithy, jocular remarks could yet be repeated.

Port-Glasgow, 5th September, 1878.

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Sir,—Allow me to confirm the statements of the correspondent who writes in your columns to-day. I am in a position to state that Richard Brown was resident at one time in Port-Glasgow. Burns, his wife, and, I believe, some of the members of his family, passed at least one night with the "mutual friend." A near relative of mine was for years on terms of the closest intimacy with the family of Alex. Brown, Richard's son, and I am aware that some articles, including several books and a pair of stockings, if I mistake not, were preserved in the house, as having been left behind by the Burns family. Alexander's widow, who is at present resident in London, and who is now unfortunately blind, has still these articles in her possession, and doubtless cherishes them with very zealous care.

Port-Glasgow, 6th September, 1878.





## OUR HARBOURS.

### ARTICLE XIII.

Thomas Watt, as we have seen, was buried in the Old West Kirkyard. At that time it was in quite a rural situation, there being no building yards or works of any kind near its walls. The sea beach, which came up close to the north wall, began at the West Quay and continued unbroken, save at the Ropework Quay, until it reached Gourrock. The manse was a little west from the church, and there were two houses on each side of it, the two to the west being those which formed the east end of the Ropework, the old fashioned gables—which still existed when the Ropework was removed to make way for the Albert Harbour—bearing testimony to their age. At his father's death, James Watt, senior, who was then about 35 years old, was in business for himself. He had served his time as a blockmaker and wright in a workshop in Cartsdyke, and now carried on that business on his own behalf. From accounts of work done by him, some of which are be-

fore the writer, we find that, in addition to blocks, dead-eyes, pumps, and sundry other articles of carpentry, he supplied all kinds of shipchandlery, and repaired and adjusted compasses. It is likely, therefore, that in his father's shop young James Watt first obtained a knowledge of those mechanical contrivances which he subsequently turned to such excellent purpose. He was born on the 19th January, 1736, in a house the next but one to the corner of William and Dalrymple Streets, on the south side of the latter street, the rent of which was ten pounds per annum. The old house was taken down many years ago and the existing tenement erected in its stead. It was for some time occupied as the Watt Tavern, but lost its licence a good many years ago. At the time of his birth his father's yard or workshop was situated in what is now Shaw Street, but was then called High Street, opposite the foot of Longwell Close. It had a weir or jetty which ran out into the harbour, the breasts of which were not then built, and at high water vessels could load or unload at this jetty. Here young James often amused himself when the tide was full by fishing for "pickies," the local generic name for the small fry of saithe, lythe, and codlings fished for by boys at the quays to this day. A number of similar weirs projected into the harbour

from other yards, and when the breasts were built there was a good deal of disputing about the compensation to be given to the proprietors, one of them called Watson even going into the Court of Session to vindicate his rights because forcible possession was taken of his weir by the Harbour Trustees before the price was agreed upon.

The following is a description of the harbour as it appeared in 1750, written by Mr Watt, senior, himself:—"The town of Greenock, on the river Clyde, from its situation and harbour may truly be said to be among the most convenient in North Britain. The High Street is now bounded on both sides with stone houses, and those on the river side, most and all of them within the full sea-mark, having closes or quays falling a considerable way into the sea (within the harbour) so that vessels of fifty or sixty tons can discharge at these back closes."

Shortly after James's birth his father built a dwelling-house on ground feued by him next his yard, to which he removed, and there James lived during the time he remained in Greenock, which was until he was about 18 years of age. In 1774 this property was conveyed to him by his father, and he thus became a feuar in his native town. After his death in 1819, it was sold, and bought by Gabriel James Weir, one



of the Magistrates of Greenock, in the hands of whose heirs it still remains.

To the business of wright and blockmaker Mr Watt, sen., seems to have added that of builder, as he was employed by Sir John Shaw, a few years before that gentleman's death, to alter and improve the interior of the Mansion-House and build the western front, which still continues much as he left it, and shows excellent workmanship. A niche above the front entrance, evidently intended to contain the date, never was filled up. The original edifice, described in the first charter, dated 1635, previously referred to, was probably more imposing in appearance, although likely not so comfortable as it was after being modernised by Mr Watt. It is there called the "auld castell-steid, castell, tour, fortalice, and manor-place new buildit." An addition was evidently made to it in 1674 on the south side, as that date appears on the door lintel over the south entrance.

Mr Watt executed various public works, such as the joiner work of the Mid Parish Church and the Old Town Hall, of which his son James was the architect. He also built the first fort erected in Greenock, which was at the Ropework Quay. It was at the time of the war with France, when the French cruisers, having met with some successes, were extremely bold, and actually came into

the Firth of Clyde, to the consternation of the inhabitants of the town. The fort was run up with great expedition under the superintendence of the Commander-in-Chief, Lord George Beauclerc, after whom it was called Fort Beauclerc, and twelve 24-pounders were mounted. Several brass field pieces were also placed along the beach, and temporary earthworks thrown up for the protection of the gunners. In addition to three companies of regulars a large number of volunteers were enrolled, muskets, swords, and ammunition being got for them from Dumbarton, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. The alarm subsided after the capture of M. Thurot's squadron, which had done considerable mischief on the coast, and captured a Greenock vessel at the entrance of the Firth. Thurot was a man of great energy and bravery. He began as a privateer on board his ship the *Mareshal de Bellisle*, mounting 44 guns, and carrying 500 men. With this ship he engaged and beat off two British 20-gun ships-of-war off Redhead, and in a cruise of two years captured no fewer than 34 merchant vessels. He afterwards received the command of a squadron of five ships of war, having on board 1,200 soldiers fitted out for the purpose of annoying the British coasts, and doing as much damage to commerce as possible. On the 16th February, 1760, three of

his ships entered Aros Bay in Islay, where he landed 200 men for the purpose of procuring provisions, which they did, and paid for same partly in cash and partly by bills on the French King's treasurer. They afterwards sailed for Ireland, and landed about a thousand men at Carrickfergus, who plundered the town and burned the castle. A Clyde vessel that had taken refuge at that place was burned after being plundered of her entire cargo of tobacco and sugar. Great preparations were made to meet the enemy should he venture up to Greenock, but they were rendered unnecessary by the capture of the enemy's squadron. This took place after a stout engagement between them and the British frigate Eolus under the command of Captain Elliot reinforced by the Pallas and Brilliant, these vessels having come up to them between the Mull of Galloway and the Isle of Man. The fort was never, therefore, put into use against the enemy, but unfortunately when firing a salute in honour of the victory of the British ships one of the guns exploded and killed two Greenock men. It was dismantled shortly afterwards, as entries appear in the treasurer's books for payments made to twelve soldiers and a sergeant for two days' work conveying the cannons, shot, and other utensils back to Dumbarton. There is also an entry of £4 9s

5d paid for an entertainment which occurred at christening the fort.

Mr Watt was named by Sir John Shaw as one of the Trustees for the management of the funds derived from the Ale Tax in 1741, and was made a Town Councillor in the charter of 1751, and he continued connected with the town in the official capacity of Trustee, Town Councillor, or Magistrate, up till June, 1774, when, at the age of 75, he gave in his resignation, having served the community for upwards of 30 years. During a large part of this time he was Treasurer of the burgh funds, and was from 1757 to 1759 one of the Magistrates. At that date he was re-elected, but declined the office, accepting the inferior one of Treasurer, as being less troublesome and probably more congenial. It was while officially connected with the town that he executed the public works already mentioned, and it says a good deal for his probity and worth that he was, notwithstanding, re-elected over and over again. The performance of contracts for the Trust while in such a position is open to animadversion, and by no means commendable, unless as a matter of necessity, which in Mr Watt's case it likely was, as at that early stage of the town's history there would be few contractors who could undertake extensive works like that of the church or the Town House. The spirit

of the law is now opposed to persons in office taking such public contracts, and is a salutary check on a practice which might be—and no doubt has often been—abused, to the grievous disadvantage of communities. The minute accepting Mr Watt's resignation is as follows :

“ Council Chambers, 10th June, 1774.—Which day the Magistrates and Council being met, Mr James Watt gave in to the meeting a resignation, dated 30th ultimo, by him resigning the office of a Manager and Councillor, which the meeting accepted of, and returned him thanks for the many good offices he had done to the community while in office.”

It is matter of regret that in his latter years troubles of various kinds came upon him ; his business, which was then chiefly that of ship-owning, being unsuccessful, and during the last six years of his life the faculties of his mind seem to have given way. He died in 1782, in his 84th year, his wife, Agnes Muirheid, also a native of Greenock, having predeceased him by many years, as did also his son John, the only brother of the engineer, who was drowned at sea when comparatively young, but not before he had evinced that he as well as James was possessed of considerable talent. The old Town Treasurer was buried in the West Kirkyard, by the side of his father, the “ Professor of Mathematicks.” The following is the inscription on his tomb :—

In Memory of

J A M E S W A T T,

Merchant in Greenock,

A benevolent and ingenious man, and a zealous  
promoter of the improvement of the Town,

who died 1782, aged 84.

Of

A G N E S M U I R H E I D,

his Spouse,

who died 1755, aged 52.

And of

J O H N W A T T,

their Son,

who perished at sea, 1763, aged 23.

To his revered Parents and to his Brother, James  
Watt has placed this Memorial.

James Watt, jun., does not seem to have exhibited before entering on his teens much of that genius which afterwards distinguished him, although he was always a somewhat precocious boy. During boyhood he was somewhat delicate, and his attendance at school on that account was irregular. By assiduous application at home, however, he attained great proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and by the perusal of books that came within his command, he extended his knowledge beyond the elementary instruction of the public schools, and cherished that

thirst for information for which he was throughout life remarkable. His first teacher was a Mr M'Adam. The following anecdote is told of his early life:—His aunt, Mrs Muirhead, sitting with him one evening at the tea table, said: "James, I never saw such an idle boy. Take a book, or employ yourself usefully; for the last half-hour you have not spoken a word, but taken off the lid of that kettle and put it on again. I'm ashamed of you." The motive power which so disturbed the lid of the kettle was evidently puzzling his mind, and he was "sometimes involved in thought, and alternately, with the aid of a cup and a silver spoon, he was observing how the steam rose from the spout and became condensed, and was counting the drops of water."

He was for some time in the Town's Grammar School, taught by Robert Arrol, who was of some reputation as a master, and he there manifested considerable aptness for mathematics, a branch of study of unusual importance looking to his future life work. His principal instructor, however, in this study was John Marr, mathematician, Greenock. Watt was also deeply interested in astronomy, and it is said that at night he often retired to a quiet retreat among the elms and beeches which then covered Regent Street and Shaw Place, to lie on his back watching the movements

of the stars, like Ferguson, the astronomical herdbooy of Scotland. As a shipchandler, his father had a number of optical instruments in his shop for observing the motions of the heavenly bodies, and no doubt James took large advantage of them in prosecuting his favourite observations during the two or three years he was with his father after leaving school. At the age of eighteen, having completed his apprenticeship as an optician and mathematical instrument maker, so far as he could be taught in Greenock, he went to Glasgow to acquire further experience, where he lived with his mother's relatives for about two years. This was in 1753, and in 1755 he went to London, probably with the view of perfecting himself still more in his profession, but he did not remain long there, having returned to Greenock the following year.







## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XIV.

Watt, as has been stated, went to London to complete himself in his profession of mathematical instrument maker. He set out for the great metropolis on the 7th June, 1755, accompanied by Mr Marr, whose wife was his cousin. They travelled on horseback, and the journey occupied them about twelve days, including the Sabbath, on which day they rested "according to the Scriptures." At this period Sir Walter Scott says journeys of "such length were made on horseback, and it was customary to halt on the Sabbath in some town where the traveller might attend Divine service, and his horse have the benefit of the day of rest, the institution of which is as humane to our brute labourers as profitable to ourselves."

In these days when some are seeking to turn the Sabbath into a mere holiday for visiting museums and picture galleries and pleasure seeking generally, it were well to take note of what is here stated. The

physical nature of man and his brute helper absolutely requires one day in seven for rest and recruitment. But man, with his twofold nature, requires it for higher and nobler purposes than the animal, and these ends are best promoted "by the holy resting from worldly employments," and the occupation of the day "in God's service," except what may be required by "works of necessity and mercy," as is very succinctly yet comprehensively set forth in the Shorter Catechism. The Sabbath is not intended to be kept as a day of gloom, for it commemorates the triumph of the resurrection; but, on the other hand, it has certainly not been given to man for mere pleasure-seeking. Those persons who prate against the Sabbath as a Puritan institution, and wish its constitution changed, are really—whatever their intentions or pretensions may be—trying to do what would be most prejudicial and injurious both to man and beast, to families and communities. If their demands were complied with, and the barrier of sanctified restraint imposed by God's law and man's necessity thrust aside thousands would be kept in the yoke on the Lord's day ministering to the votaries of pleasure and there would be great danger that it might speedily be changed in this country, as it has already been in many parts of the Continent, from a mere pleasure day to a

toilsome work day. And, indeed, if men are so careless and thoughtless as not only to forget the higher purposes of the day altogether, but to keep numbers employed for their amusement, they cannot expect but that others will in course of time seek to have them put in the yoke for their profit. Respect to the divine injunction "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," the devotion of the day to God's service and works of mercy, and the strict observance in dealing with others of the golden rule, are indeed the best safeguards for one's own protection.

Do unto others as ye would  
 Have others do to you ;  
 And what ye would not care to have  
 Be sure ye never do.

Instead of condemning our Puritan and Covenanting forefathers for having won back man's birthright, "the holy Sabbath," they are deserving of the highest praise, and the generation that wilfully sacrifices this birthright to the demands of pleasure or profit will neither be deserving of such an heritage, nor worthy of such an ancestry.

On arriving in London Watt had some difficulty in finding a suitable employer, the number of masters engaged in that scientific trade being then very small. After he had been a week trying to get employment he

wrote home—"I have not yet got a master. We have tried several, but they all make some objection or other. I find that if any agree with me it will not be for less than a year, and even at that time they will be expecting some money." In the first week of July, however, Mr John Morgan of Finch Lane, Cornhill, agreed to receive and instruct him in his business of mathematical instrument maker for the sum of twenty guineas, and Watt having entered on these terms, continued with him till the year was out, when he returned to Greenock.

Having fixed to begin business in Glasgow, Watt went there in the latter end of the same year (1756), but not being a member of guild or burghess of the city, or having then married the daughter of a burghess (which also gave the qualification), the Corporation of Hammersmen, who viewed him as an intruder on their privileges, took steps to prevent him opening a shop in the city. By good fortune George Muirhead, a relative of his mother, happened at that time to be one of the professors in the University, and through him a small apartment within its buildings was placed at his disposal to establish a shop and carry on his business. He was also honoured with the title of Instrument-maker to the University, with all the privileges of that office. While here he formed the friendship of Professor

Adam Smith, the political economist; Black, the chemist; and Simson, the geometer, three of the most eminent Scotsmen then living. He continued to prosecute his avocation in this place for about seven years, during which time, so far as health and necessary employment could permit, he applied himself to the acquirement of scientific knowledge.

While still working there, Anderson, the Professor of Natural Philosophy, sent him a model of Newcomen's steam engine, which was then mainly used for pumping water from coal mines, to repair, and this seems to have given occasion for the exercise of those inventive powers which have made his name immortal and revolutionised the commercial relations of the globe. He had for two or three years previously been occupying himself with researches into the properties of steam, and had formed the idea of improving the steam-engine. Referring to the subject, he modestly says:— "My attention was first directed in 1759 to the subject of the steam-engine by Dr Robison, then a student in the University of Glasgow, and nearly of my own age. Robison at that time threw out the idea of applying the power of the steam-engine to the moving of the wheel carriage and to other purposes, but the scheme was not matured and was soon abandoned on his going abroad." Watt's acute mind saw the defects of Newcomen's

engine, and he applied himself with earnestness to remedy them, and after repeated and careful experiments he succeeded, and thus established his reputation. The story of his success is best told in his own words—"When the model came into my hands in the winter, 1763," he says, "I set about repairing it as a mere mechanician, and when that was done and it was set to work, I was quite surprised to find that its boiler could not supply it with steam, although, apparently, quite large enough. By blowing the fire it was made to take a few strokes, but it required an enormous quantity of injection water, though it was very lightly loaded in the pump. It was found, however, that by shortening the column of water in the pump the boiler could be made to supply the cylinder with steam, and the engine then could work regularly with a moderate quantity of injection."

In 1763, being then qualified as a burgess by marriage with his cousin, Miss Miller, the daughter of a burgess, he removed from the apartment in the College and opened a shop in the Saltmarket, opposite St Andrew's Square, for carrying on his business. He afterwards removed to Buchanan's Land in the Trongate, a little west of the Tontine; and in 1768 he gave up shopkeeping, and removed to a private house in King Street,

nearly opposite the Greenmarket, and in a shed near this house he conducted most of his experiments for improving the steam-engine.

Having given up his shop, and his prospects of profiting by the new engine not being very bright, he commenced business as a civil engineer, and was soon employed on many important surveys. In 1767 he surveyed the Forth and Clyde Canal, he also superintended the making of the Monkland Canal, for which he had made plans and prepared estimates. He likewise surveyed for the Caledonian and Crinan Canals, and reported on the practicability of these schemes although they were not carried out until a later period, when a re-survey was made by Smeaton, who states in his report that he was much indebted to Mr Watt's previous survey, and had found only a foot of difference on the whole 60 miles, and this at Loch Oich, from which Mr Watt had been recalled to Glasgow by the illness and death of his wife. He also surveyed the Clyde for the Glasgow authorities, and recommended them to deepen the river rather than lock it by means of a canal, as they had proposed shortly before.

He made the plans and specifications for the harbours at Port-Glasgow, and acted as engineer for the Greenock authorities on more

than one occasion. When it was proposed to square the Old East Quay, and add an arm to it running eastwards, forming part of what is now the old Steamboat Quay, he was employed to furnish plans and overlook the work. The following letter to Bailie Gammell, who had been an old school-fellow of his, gives some particulars of this quay, which may be worth quoting :—

Glasgow, December 19, 1773.—Sir,—I only returned from the survey of the Forth two days ago, and I have been so much indisposed since, that I could not consider your subject. I am to be at Port-Glasgow with our magistrates, when I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you, as I understand you are to dine there with them. I defer most of what I have to say till that time, and hope you will come provided with the necessary queries, and the plan of the harbour. In the meantime I send you the dimensions of the breast walls, which I find I intended to be fifteen feet high; that is, I supposed them to be founded as low as the ordinary spring tides low water. You will, at Port-Glasgow, see the contract for their pier, which I propose for a model for yours. The breast should be founded seven feet thick, and should, by two intakes in the first two courses, be taken in off the outside to six feet thick, from which should batter to four feet thick at tops. The greatest part of the batter should be off the outside thus (here a drawing is given of the section) I would build in treshes of old ships' oak to fix the slides for bearing off ships' sides, as proposed in Port-Glasgow new quay, but these particulars, and others necessary, I will explain to-morrow,



and furnish articles of contract. Such a wall will contain twelve yards of masonry of two feet thick in the running yard, and should cost as follows:—

For the hewn stone in the facing—average length, $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet—105 cubic feet, at 4d, . . . . .	£1 15 0
For the capping long stones, right across the wall, $13\frac{1}{2}$ feet at 5d, . . . . .	0 5 $7\frac{1}{2}$
For the rubble stones and loading— $5\frac{1}{2}$ yards of 2 feet thick—at 1s 3d, . . . . .	0 6 $10\frac{1}{2}$
Building hewn stones and rubble— $12\frac{1}{2}$ yards of 2 feet thick—at 1s 2d, that is, 42s a rood. . . . .	0 14 $4\frac{1}{2}$

Total expense of stonework per running yard, casting the foundations and drainage, . . . . .	£3 1 $10\frac{1}{2}$
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Excuse haste. I have not time to copy this, and will be obliged to you for copy when we meet. I remain, with regard, &c.,

JAMES WATT.

After the interview at Port-Glasgow it was agreed to carry out the work in accordance with his designs. He also furnished plans and specifications for the formation of two reservoirs, or dams, at the base of the Whinhill, and a cistern, 72 feet in length and 54 in breadth, on the north side of the present Wellpark. These plans, which are three in number, are still in existence. The first is a plan of the two Reservoirs; the second gives the length of the water-course from the burn at Overton to the Reservoirs, and from the

Fairy Bridge, which was situated at the head of Lynedoch Street, near where the South Western Railway bridge is now, to the Square, 734 yards ; and the third, the water-course from Ingleston Spring to the Fairy Bridge, 850 yards. These works were commenced and finished under the eye of Mr Watt, and were executed in a most thorough manner. The town treasurer's books show that for these last plans and estimates he received, on 26th March, 1774, the sum of £26 15s. From subsequent minutes of the Trustees of the same year, it would appear that Mr Watt was in England at the time the water pipes were delivered at Greenock, and it was thought a surveyor would require to be employed to fix the levels for laying them ; but, on being advised of the circumstance, he hastened to Greenock, at great inconvenience to himself, and, with the assistance of the old gentleman, his father, and a lad, to carry the stakes, laid down the levels with his own hands—thus completing to his satisfaction an undertaking which was at the time of the utmost importance to the community.

In 1769 Watt patented his improvements on the steam engine, and while the patent was passing through its various stages he entered into an arrangement with Dr Roebuck, the then managing partner of the

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engines erected at Chacewater, in Cornwall, from whom Watt & Boulton received no less than £800 annually. In the same year (1775) Mr Watt married again, his second wife being Annie M'Gregor, daughter of Mr M'Gregor, a Glasgow millowner.

From time to time he continued to add additional improvements to the steam engine, and to invent new appliances for perfecting various kinds of machinery for the purpose of increasing the amount manufactured while lessening the cost of labour. In this he was eminently successful, although, like others who have raised themselves above the common level, he had many detractors. Over and over again he was obliged to go into Court to prosecute infringers of his patent rights, which was to him, who preferred the retirement of his study to the worry of business, a great vexation. Writing to his father-in-law, Mr M'Gregor, he says :—

Our rotative engines, which we have now rendered very complete, are certainly very applicable to the driving of cotton mills. Our premium we have fixed at £5 per annum for every horse power the machine is equal to, and the coals are about ten pounds weight for each horse.

We find that we must in spite of every peaceable disposition go to law with some people who encroach upon our patent rights, and as our very being depends on the success of that suit, we must bestow every attention on it, which necessarily

Carron Iron Works, by which that gentleman, in consideration of some advances for carrying on the experiments, and his risk of capital, was to get two-thirds of the clear profits from the sale of the engines which they made. Want of capital thus prevented Watt, as it has done many another inventor before and since, from getting the full benefit of his invention. A few years later, when Roebuck got into difficulties, his share of the patent was, with Mr Watt's consent, transferred to Mr Matthew Boulton, of the Soho Foundry, near Birmingham, and that gentleman subsequently assumed Mr Watt into co-partnership with himself, under the firm of Boulton, Watt & Co. When he entered into this partnership, Mr Watt, who would be about 38 years of age, left Scotland and settled permanently in England. In 1775, Parliament having renewed the patent for twenty-five years, the manufacture of steam engines was commenced by the new firm. Many engines were made by them, and licenses granted to miners in different parts of the country to use their engines, on condition that the patentees should receive a third part of the saving of coals by the new engine in comparison with Newcomen's, which was formerly used. Some idea may be formed of the profits netted by this arrangement from what we know of the bargain with the proprietors of three large

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From time to time he continued to add additional improvements to the steam engine, and to invent new appliances for perfecting various kinds of machinery for the purpose of increasing the amount manufactured while lessening the cost of labour. In this he was eminently successful, although, like others who have raised themselves above the common level, he had many detractors. Over and over again he was obliged to go into Court to prosecute infringers of his patent rights, which was to him, who preferred the retirement of his study to the worry of business, a great vexation. Writing to his father-in-law, Mr M'Gregor, he says :—

Our rotative engines, which we have now rendered very complete, are certainly very applicable to the driving of cotton mills. Our premium we have fixed at £5 per annum for every horse power the machine is equal to, and the coals are about ten pounds weight for each horse.

We find that we must in spite of every peaceable disposition go to law with some people who encroach upon our patent rights, and as our very being depends on the success of that suit, we must bestow every attention on it, which necessarily

takes up much of our time, and we think of beginning it this term, that is, within a month, if the advice of our counsel prove favourable, otherwise we had better bear with some inconvenience than lose all. Yet, if we do not vindicate our rights, we run a risk of losing all that way."





## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XV.

In the vexation caused by the multifarious piracies of his invention, Watt declared "that there was nothing more foolish than inventing, and that nine-tenths of mankind are knaves and the other tenth fools." During the numerous law suits he was obliged to carry on for his own protection he met with many strange specimens among the legal profession, and formed not a very high opinion of some of them. Writing to a friend he calls them the "anthrophagi of London," and says "all the counties of England should join in petitioning Parliament to make it high treason for any of the tribe to be found in the realm." Introducing two of his agents to each other, he said—"You, Mr W——, attend to the management of my legal affairs in the city, and you, Mr D——, in the country. I am but a poor pigeon, gentlemen, and I only hope that in plucking me you will not quarrel over it." It is satisfactory to know that the verdict



of the jury and the judgment of the court effectually vindicated the justice of the claims made by Mr Watt, as the sole patentee of the improved steam-engine. The firm of Boulton & Watt by this decision received the right to sell what Mr Boulton so accurately describes in his reply to a query by Dr Johnson's friend Boswell, when he visited the works at Soho—"We sell here what all the world desires to have—Power."

Immediately after the trial had gone in his favour, Watt wrote to his father the following letter, dated 8th May, 1775 :—

"DEAR FATHER,—After a series of various and violent opposition, I have at last got an Act of Parliament vesting the property of my new fire-engines in me and my assigns throughout Great Britain and the Plantations for twenty-five years to come, which I hope will be very beneficial to me, as there is already considerable demand for them. I shall be obliged to stay here a few days longer, after which I return to Birmingham to set about making some engines that are ordered, after which I intend to give myself the happiness of seeing you and the dear children. My warmest wishes and affection ever attend you. May God render your age comfortable, is the prayer of your ever affectionate and dutiful son,

JAMES WATT."

In the year 1800, Mr Watt withdrew from the concern at Soho, giving over his share of the business to his two sons, James and Gregory, the latter of whom died in 1804 in

the prime of life, much respected by all who knew him, after having given ample proofs of great mental endowments. Mr Watt retired from business with a well-earned competency which enabled him to enjoy the evening of his life with ease and comfort in the bosom of his family. In these years of his leisure he visited the continent, and enjoyed much happiness in the society of eminent men of science with whom he became acquainted, and who put a high value on his friendship. An anecdote has been preserved of Mr Watt's second visit to Paris which may be worth relating. He was going through the Tuileries, and in one of the rooms found a French housemaid much perplexed by some bright English stoves which had just arrived, and which she did not know how to clean. An English gentleman was standing by, to whom she appealed for information. This was the Hon. Charles James Fox. He could give no help, but, said he, there is a countryman of mine here who will tell you all about it. This countryman was Watt, and he being told what was wanted at once gave full instructions to the maid as to the best mode of cleaning the grate.

At home he took great delight in his garden, and in his later years, having purchased a farm in Wales, he often retired to it and

employed himself in superintending the farm work, especially the planting of trees, many of which were planted with his own hands. Although never a very robust man, and much subject to headaches, he, by taking good care of himself, enjoyed, on the whole, a tolerable share of good health. He had one bad habit, which provoked Mrs Watt very much, as it dirtied her table cloths, and did not add at all, as she believed, to the dignity of her husband's appearance. It was that of taking snuff, a practice more common then than now. Whenever the snuff mull was left exposed in any place where the good lady—who had declared war against snuff—could lay hands on it, she immediately seized it and locked it up in the cupboard where she kept the china, and of which she alone had the key. The philosopher submitted for the time with his usual placidity, but when Mrs Watt was in the press, and working among her favourite ware he would gently turn the handle of his study door, and push it open noiselessly with his compasses or a pencil sufficiently wide to watch her movements. If she turned her back, leaving the press door open, he would immediately make a bound, recapture the mull, and bear it off in triumph. By assiduous efforts, however, Mrs Watt got him to break off the dirty habit altogether.

It would be very desirable if the use of tobacco in the form of smoking, so prevalent in our day, were to become as much a thing of the past as snuffing. In the case of young people it is detrimental to health, and indoors it is always disagreeable. To smoke in small apartments and compel infants and women of delicate organisation to inhale the fumes of the pipe, as is often thoughtlessly done by selfish fathers, brothers, and husbands, is inexpressibly cruel, not only causing them inconvenience for the time, but being most injurious to their health. It has been stated by observers, and we think it is not overstated, that fully one-half of the sickness which occurs on board the river steamers is caused by the fumes of tobacco acting on the sensitive organs of persons unaccustomed to the nuisance, and it were well if steamboat owners insisted more strenuously on smokers, if they must smoke when on board, going to a part of the vessel where they will not be able to render others uncomfortable by their selfish indulgence. In Germany lately—proceeding on a recommendation from the Medical Faculty—smoking by lads of sixteen and under has been prohibited, as detrimental to their own health and through them prejudicial to the race. This is a step in the right direction, although it would be preferable.

were it frowned down by public opinion, rather than need to be put down by the force of public statute. We do not think, however, the line should be drawn at sixteen, as the results of smoking are very injurious to the constitution of many beyond that age. To most of those hobbledehoyes whom we see daily clustering about tobacco shops or swaggering along our streets with a pipe or cigar in their mouths it must also be injurious, and it were well if parents exercised their authority to prevent the habit altogether. Nothing can be more deplorable than to see young men seemingly making smoking—varied occasionally by a swill at the beer tap, to replace the saliva exhausted by expectoration—the chief business of life. It is much to be regretted for many reasons, and it is to be hoped that public opinion may speedily be awakened to the mischievous consequences which flow from such habits, and set its face against them.

One of the last visits made by Mr Watt to his friends in Scotland was in 1815, and it was at that time he consulted with Messrs James Walkinshaw and Andrew Anderson, of Greenock, and Bailie Watt, of Cartsdyke, about the formation of a scientific library in Greenock for the use of young men who might have a turn for

science or mechanics. His attention had been drawn to this by having seen in Mr Heron, the watchmaker's shop (Mr Heron's shop was situated at the corner of Cathcart Square and William Street in a two storey tenement which then stood where the large tenement built by Mr Forrest, now Mr Rowan's, stands) a picture left there for exhibition by a young workman. Struck by the ability of the youthful artist, he inquired if there were other young men of promising talent in town who might be stimulated by some judicious means of encouragement. The answer being satisfactory, he resolved to devote one hundred pounds to the formation of a scientific library, and made the following proposal to the Magistrates and Town Council of Greenock regarding same :—

James Watt of Heathfield, in the county of Stafford, LL.D., offers to the Magistrates and Town Council of Greenock the sum of One Hundred Pounds sterling, on the following conditions :—

1st. That the sum shall be laid out on books for the use of the Mathematical School of Greenock, which books shall be such as treat of Natural Philosophy and Mathematics, and more especially upon Geometry, Mechanics, Astronomy, Navigation, the Motion, Resistance, and other properties of Fluids, and the science and art of Navigation.

2nd. That a catalogue shall be made of said books, and kept in some proper place.

3rd. That if any of the books be lost the Magis-

strates and Town Council shall replace them at the expense of the town.

4th. That a small annual subscription shall be exacted from those using the said books in order to add to their number, and for tear and wear.

5th. That the Rev. Dr Scott, Messrs Andrew Anderson, James Watt, of Crawforddyke, and James Walkinshaw, along with the master of the Mathematical School for the time being, and any other two gentlemen whom the Magistrates shall appoint, shall be the purchasers and guardians of the said books.

6th. That it shall be competent to the Magistrates, with the consent of the majority of the guardians, to make rules for the library.

7th. That an act of sederunt shall be entered in the town's books agreeing to the above terms, and comprising the same, and a copy sent to the said James Watt, of Heathfield.

In reference to the above proposal Mr Watt says further :—

My intention in this donation is to form the beginning of a scientific library for the instruction of the youth of Greenock, and I hope it will prompt others to add to it and render my townsmen as eminent for their knowledge as for their spirit of enterprise.

On the 7th February, 1816, the Town Council agreed to accept of the offer, which is recorded in the following terms :—

The Town Council having had the above conditions in reference to the formation of a scientific library placed before them, and the object Dr Watt

has in view marking distinctly a kindly remembrance of his native town, a benevolence of heart, and an unceasing regard for the progress of science, the Council with pleasure agree to accept the proposed deposit and to follow out the plan of the donor.

The library was speedily set agoing, the money being at once applied for the purchase of books, including some recommended by Mr Watt for their scientific and commercial character, which he thought specially suitable for a town like Greenock, so deeply interested in commerce and mechanics. It is deeply to be regretted that Greenock cannot yet boast of the establishment of a public library under the Libraries Act, but, considering the great importance the study of standard works—which can only be made accessible to the great body of the people by such a means—has in carrying on the educational process which is but begun in school, it is to be hoped that many years will not elapse before Watt's native town is possessed of such a desideratum.

In 1805 the firm of Boulton & Watt supplied the engines used for the first steamer built in America. The principal part of the engine was made and forwarded early in that year, the execution of the subordinate parts being undertaken by Mr Fulton, the American engineer, himself. Fulton having built a vessel at New York called the



Clermont, the machinery sent from Soho was fitted up therein, and the first trial made in the spring of 1807. The trial proved eminently successful, and this vessel was soon after established as a regular steam-packet between New York and Albany. As Henry Bell did not launch the Comet till 1812, it was contended by America that Fulton was entitled to the credit of first applying steam power for marine purposes, which was disputed in this country. The contention was very high for a period of years, until, indeed, an inquiry was instituted, when it was found that the first application of steam in that way was made between the years 1785 and 1790 by Mr Miller, of Dalswinton, in Dumfriesshire, assisted by Mr Symington, a millwright in that neighbourhood. Mr Miller at first tried the experiment on a considerable sized pleasure boat which he launched on the Dalswinton Loch, the paddle-wheel of which, however, was in the centre of the vessel. As it turned out a success, he tried the experiment on a larger scale on the Forth and Clyde Canal with a barge furnished with an engine by the Carron Iron Co. Although a speed of six to seven miles an hour was attained by this vessel, Mr Miller, having lost considerably by his various experiments, was unable to turn his success to profitable

account. Mr Symington afterwards built a boat with a brick funnel on the same principle, which was used for many years for towing vessels on the canal. From the inquiry it was discovered that Mr Fulton, whose father had been a native of Dumfriesshire, had received the design of Mr Miller's boat from Mr Symington when on a visit to his relatives, and that he had seen Symington's steamer working on the canal before building his first steamer in America. The credit of the invention was therefore found to belong to Scotland, but the Americans were the first who turned it to practical use for carrying passengers.

Henry Bell's steamer the "Comet" was built in 1812 at Port-Glasgow in the yard of Messrs J. & C. Wood. The main part of the machinery was made by Messrs Anderson, Campbell & Co., of Greenock, whose successors are the well-known firm of Messrs Caird & Co. It plied on the Clyde between Glasgow and Greenock.

In 1813 another steamer was built, called the Glasgow, and steam communication to Rothesay was opened up. In 1814 the Morning Star was built, and in 1815 the Caledonia, and the same year two steamers were built to trade to London, one going by the Forth and Clyde Canal to Leith, and from thence by the east coast to London, and the other

by the west coast and round the Lands End, these being the first attempts at steam navigation made in the open sea off our coasts.

During Mr Watt's last visit to Greenock in 1815, in company with Mr Walkinshaw, he went an excursion in a steamboat as far as Rothesay, which in those days occupied the greater part of a day. Mr Watt entered into conversation with the engineer of the boat, pointing out to him the method of backing the engine. With a foot rule he demonstrated what was meant; but not succeeding in making him understand, he at last, under the impulse of the ruling passion, although in his 80th year, threw off his overcoat, and putting his hand to the engine himself, showed the practical application of his lecture. Previous to this the back stroke of the engine had not been used, the practice being to stop the engine entirely a considerable time before reaching the quay, to allow of the gradual diminution of her speed. That the intellectual pleasure derived from the society and conversation of Mr Watt was of the highest order the testimony of his most intimate friends and associates sufficiently proves. "I experienced much pleasure," says St Fond, "in visiting Mr Watt, whose extensive knowledge in chemistry and the arts rendered his conversa-

tion very interesting. He is a man of great conceptions, and nature has endowed him with a very vigorous mind. His moral qualities and the engaging manner in which he expresses his thoughts daily increase my respect for him." It was on his last visit to Scotland, when he was upwards of 80 years of age, that Sir Walter Scott met him in Edinburgh surrounded by a little band of literati, of which he was the centre. Sir Walter thus describes the scene :—

"Amidst this company stood Mr Watt, the man whose genius discovered the means of multiplying our natural resources to a degree perhaps beyond his own stupendous powers of calculation and combination, bringing the treasures of the abyss to the summit of the earth, giving the feeble hand of man the momentum of an Afrite, commanding manufactures to arise, as the rod of the prophet produced water in the desert, affording the means of dispensing with that time and tide which wait for no man, and of sailing without that wind which defied the commands and threats of Xerxes himself. This potent commander of the elements—this abridger of time and space—this magician whose cloudy machinery has produced a change on the world, the effects of which, extraordinary as they are, perhaps are only now beginning to be felt—was not only the most profound man of science, the most successful combiner of powers and calculator of numbers as adapted to practical purposes—was not only one of the most generally well-informed, but one of the best and kindest of beings. Methinks I yet see and hear what I shall never see and hear again. In his eighty-third year

the alert, kind, benevolent old man had his attention at every one's question, his information at every one's command. His talents and fancy flowed on every subject. One gentleman was a deep philologist. He talked with him on the origin of the alphabet as if he had been coeval with Cadmus. Another was a celebrated critic. You would have said the old man had studied political economy and belles-lettres all his life; of science it is unnecessary to speak; it was his own distinguished walk, and yet, Captain Clutterbuck, when he spoke with your countryman Jedediah Cleishbotham you would have sworn he had been coeval with Claverhouse and Burley—with the persecutors and persecuted, and could number every shot the dragoons had fired at the fugitive Covenanters.

Such was the impression left on Sir Walter Scott by the old man eloquent, and when we consider the concurrent testimony borne to his ability and character by men like Brougham, Jeffrey, and others, it cannot be said to be overdrawn.

On the 19th of August, at his own house at Heathfield, Staffordshire, he tranquilly expired, and, amid the reverent sorrow of all classes of men, his remains were interred in the Parish Church of Handsworth, near that of his venerable associate Mr Boulton. A colossal statue by Chantrey was erected in his honour in Westminster Abbey, King George the Fourth heading the subscription list with a sum of £500. On the inscription, which was composed by Lord Brougham, it bears to

be erected by "the King, his Ministers, and many of the Nobles and Commoners of the realm, not to perpetuate a name which must endure while the peaceful arts flourish, but to show that mankind have learnt to honour those who best deserve their gratitude."

In Greenock a monument was also erected in his honour. A meeting was held on the 20th July, 1824, at which a subscription list was opened and headed by Sir Michael Shaw Stewart and Mr Stewart Nicolson of Carnock, the grandfather and father of the present Baronet, with the sum of fifty guineas each. The only survivors of those subscribing to that list, which contains the names of the most influential inhabitants at that period, are our respected townsman Mr Robert Steele, senior, shipbuilder, and our former townsman the venerable Mr Adam Fairrie, sugar refiner, Liverpool. A second meeting called by public advertisement was held in the Assembly Rooms, Cathcart Street, on the 30th August, 1826, by which time the sum of £1,703 had been subscribed. Mr Stewart Nicolson, who had by this time become Sir Michael Shaw Stewart as successor to his father who had died on the 4th August of the previous year, presided, and urged the importance of Greenock doing its duty to the memory of Watt in a becoming manner. Sir Humphry Davy, who was related to Sir Michael, was also

present and spoke in support of the movement. Mr James Watt, son of the engineer, being in Greenock at the time also attended the meeting and expressed a wish that the funds raised should be expended in procuring a statue by Chantrey, and that he would give a liberal donation towards the erection of a building for its reception. Mr Watt also stated that his father had entertained a strong desire to contribute to the public library, being the only Institution of a literary and scientific description which Greenock possessed ; and that following out his father's intention, he purposed himself to give £2,000 (which he subsequently raised to £3,000) to be employed in the erection of a library of which the statue should form the chief ornament. At the same time he expressed a desire that the site and plan of the building should be fixed by himself, but said that he would not insist on this if the meeting objected. The meeting agreed to give effect to Mr Watt's proposal and leave to him the selection of the site and form of building, although Mr John Fairrie for himself and other subscribers said he would have preferred a bronze statue erected at the Steamboat Quay or some other prominent situation. A committee was appointed to act along with him, consisting of the following gentlemen, viz. :—Sir M. S. Stewart,

Bart., the Magistrates of Greenock, Messrs John Scott, Wm. M'Dowall, James Smith, of Jordan Hill, James Stewart (father of Mr James Stewart, M.P.), James Watt, Roger Aytoun, Archibald Baine, William M'Fie, Gabriel J. Weir, Dr John Speirs (Houston Street), George Robertson, jun., James Ramsay, William Johnstone, and John Fairrie—the Magistrates to be conveners, and any five to be a quorum. Having fixed on the south side of Union Street as a suitable site, the centre part of the present building was erected, the wings being added afterwards. It is after a plan by Dr Blore, in the old English style of architecture.

When the building was ready to receive it, the statue was brought from London and under the eye of Sir F. Chantrey himself was placed in an alcove prepared for it opposite the principal entrance. The statue is of white marble, and is regarded by competent judges not only as one of the best of Sir Francis Chantrey's productions, but as one of the first specimens of the art. The distinguished and venerable philosopher is represented in a sitting posture, as in the statues erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey and at Glasgow. With one hand he is grasping a double sheet of paper, supposed to be a plan, with the other



he is applying a pair of compasses to the paper before him. The statue is placed on a high pedestal, with a tablet in front, on which there is the following inscription, composed by Lord Jeffrey:—

The  
Inhabitants of Greenock  
Have erected this Statue of

JAMES WATT,

Not to extend a fame  
Already identified with  
The miracles of steam,  
But to testify  
The pride and reverence  
With which he is remembered  
In the place of his Nativity,  
And their deep sense  
Of the great benefits  
His genius has conferred  
On mankind.

Born XIX January, MDCCXXXVI.

Died at Heathfield,  
In Staffordshire,  
August XXV, MDCCCXXI.





## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XVI.

The year 1741 was one of considerable importance to the burgh of Greenock, as on the 30th day of January in that year Sir John Shaw granted his first charter in favour of the inhabitants. Previous to that date the whole power of local government was in the hands of the Laird himself, who appointed the Baron Bailie and other officials, such as the shore-master (whom we now call harbour-master) and collector of dues. Even the managers who looked after the funds, collected the ale tax, and docqueted the accounts, were generally nominated by Sir John or his Baron Bailie. Between the years 1734, when the debt on the harbour was paid up, and 1741 there were occasionally disputes between the Superior and the people as to the application of the funds. The latter, who seem early to have imbibed the opinion that representation should follow taxation, were desirous of having the control both of the funds and the harbours, but to this Sir John

seems for a time to have demurred. By this charter, however, the control of the funds was conceded, although the powers conferred therein were much more limited than were afterwards given by the charter of 1751.

The 1741 charter purports to be for the better government and management of "the public funds that have accumulated, or may accumulate from the voluntary assessment laid, with my consent, by the inhabitants of the burgh, on all the malt ground at the mill of Wester Greenock." It then proceeds to give authority to the feuars and sub-feuars to elect nine of their number to be trustees or managers of the said public funds. The sub-feuars referred to were those holding from Lord Cathcart, he being—under the arrangement mentioned in a previous number—the principal feuar of a considerable part of the town, the sub-feus from him being generally known as the Cathcart feus. The clause of the charter giving the power of election is as follows:—"The said feuars and sub-feuars shall meet and appoint nine of the most wise, substantial, and best qualified of the burgh of Greenock, being feuars or sub-feuars (the Bailie or Bailies of the barony for the time being that shall be appointed and chosen by me, being of the said number of nine), to be

managers and administrators of the whole public funds already belonging to the said burgh or barony, or which shall hereafter pertain or belong to the same." The names of the nine most wise, substantial, and best qualified of the burgh, elected under this charter, unfortunately, cannot be given, as the burgh minutes for the first ten years were torn out of the minute-book, by a reckless town-clerk, who had been suspended from his office by the Magistrates for carelessness and misconduct. It is most likely, however, that they were the same, or nearly the same, as those named as trustees in the first Act of Parliament for the burgh, which was passed in 1750. They were—John Alexander, writer, and present Baron Bailie; Robert Donald, Robert Rae, James Warden, Gabriel Mathie, Wm. Gemmill, James Watt, and James Butcher, merchants; and Nathan Wilson, surgeon, in Greenock.

According to the Treasurer's accounts, some of which are still extant, the Trustees of that period seem to have held many, if not all, of their meetings in the large room of John M'Laren's Inn, at the Cross-shore. After a heavy sederunt in connection with the affairs of an important town, of 4,000 inhabitants, they were accustomed to take a refreshment of such cordials as Mr M'Laren's house afforded, which were

duly charged for in the Treasurer's accounts. Under date 26th May, 1749, the worthy Treasurer, Gabriel Lang, charges 3s 4½d for expenses at the meeting of the Trustees at Mr M'Laren's, and on the 30th of the same month he charges 1s 6d for expenses incurred when agreeing with the masons to build the cellars. As the charge is moderate, this was likely for a social glass taken by the treasurer, the contractor, and probably a bailie, at fixing the contract. The quality of the favourite beverage consumed at the Trustees' meetings may be gathered from an entry under date 10th August of the same year :—"To cash paid John M'Laren for punch at the Council meeting, 2s 6d." These charges for refreshing the Town Council cannot certainly be considered extravagant, but there were occasions when they ventured on a greater expenditure. In connection with the Fair, which was then held in May, the charge generally amounted to pounds instead of shillings. In 1750 the sum paid to Mr M'Laren at the "riding of the Fair" was £4 15s 1d. At the Fair there was always a crowd of strangers from the surrounding country, and of Highlanders from Argyllshire and Dumbartonshire. These Highlanders, who all came in boats, drew them up on the beach, with their prows to the High Street, at that part of the harbour which now forms the West Breast. That part

of the High Street (now Dalrymple Street) at that time had no buildings on the north side. Each boat was therefore drawn up close to the street or road, with a plank or gangway between the vessel and the shore to give access when required, as most of the people belonging to the boats lodged on board at night, the houses in town being too few to afford accommodation to the multitudes who thronged to it at the Fair time.

For the purpose of duly impressing those Highlanders and the strangers generally with respect and submission to the authority under which it was held, and to scare Rob Roy and his marauding contemporaries, who were usually prowling in the neighbourhood on such occasions, the ceremony of "riding the fair" was performed with great pomp on the first day of the gathering. The Town Council were accustomed on that day to entertain Sir John Shaw and the deacons of the trades in M'Laren's Inn, and after drinking the King's health and throwing their glasses among the populace, they issued thence in formal procession, Sir John and the Magistrates leading on horseback, and the trades and town officials, who had been marshalled outside, following, with flags and banners flying, and usually accompanied by a band of music. The procession, in this order, perambulated the streets of the burgh to the intense delight

of all the urchins, and the no small admiration of "braw John Highlandman," while, no doubt, it struck the necessary terror into the hearts of intending evil doers. Although latterly this exhibition became a mere pageant, it was not abolished until 1822.

In 1745, the-year of the last rebellion, Sir John, who was now well advanced in life and not so able to take the field as in 1715, remained in Greenock and interested himself raising a body of volunteers for the protection of the town and neighbourhood. He drilled them regularly himself in the park attached to the Mansionhouse, and occasionally rode through the town at their head, the volunteers carrying their baggage and accoutrements as if under marching orders. About the beginning of the rebellion the Earl of Kilmarnock and the Marquis of Tullibardine called upon him to ascertain his feelings towards Prince Charles and to ask his advice. Although by no means satisfied with some of the actions of the existing Government, Sir John told them decidedly that after the country's experience of the Stuarts he expected no good from them if again placed on the throne, and earnestly implored his friends not to enter on an enterprise fraught with such danger on behalf of a race who had caused such suffering to Scotland. They listened respectfully, but were not persuaded.

The result was the ruin of both, as Sir John had predicted, the Earl having been beheaded on Tower Hill, and the Marquis having died in the Tower before his trial came on. There is a tradition that when with his Highland followers he had taken Glasgow, Prince Charles came down to Greenock to try to induce Sir John and Cartsburn to take his side, and that he slept a night in Garvel Park House, but we scarcely think it can be authentic, as war vessels were moored at intervals from Fort Beauclerc to above Port-Glasgow, and volunteers and marines were under arms along all the roads leading to the town. A reconnoitring party, however, consisting of 20 or 30 soldiers, with two or three officers, came down as far as the Clune Brae, above Port-Glasgow, but receiving the fire from the ship of war stationed there they immediately returned to Glasgow. The defeat of the Prince at Culloden for ever crushed the hopes of the Stuarts, and secured the throne of Great Britain to the Hanover dynasty, who had succeeded on the death of Queen Anne, and the first of whom had been so caustically satirised in the celebrated Jacobite ballad,

THE WEE, WEE GERMAN LAIRDIE.

Wha the deil hae we gotten for a king,  
 But a wee, wee German lairdie !  
 When we gaed ower to bring him hame,  
 He was delvin' in his kail yardie ;



He was sheughing kail and laying leeks,  
 Without the hose and but the breeks;  
 And up his beggar duds he cleeks,  
 This wee, wee German lairdie.

And he's slippit down in our gudeman's chair,  
 The wee, wee German lairdie;  
 And he's brought fouth o' his foreign trash,  
 And dibbled them in his yardie.  
 He's pu'd the rose o' English loons,  
 And broken the harp o' Irish clowns;  
 But our Scotch thistle will jag his thumbs,  
 This wee, wee German lairdie.

Auld Scotland, thou'rt ower cauld a hole,  
 For nursing siccan vermin,  
 But the very dogs in England's Court  
 They bark and howl in German.  
 Then keep thy dibble in thy ain hand,  
 Thy spade, but, and thy yardie,  
 For wha the deil now claims your land  
 But a wee, wee German lairdie.

The Charter of 1741, although for a time it somewhat allayed the discontent of the people, yet did not give complete satisfaction. Nor is this to be wondered at, for its provisions amounted to little more than giving the people permission to tax themselves—a privilege on which they do not seem to have placed great value, as many still declined to pay the assessment. In these circumstances the amount of funds at command of the Trustees did not fully answer the urgent requirements of cleansing the harbour and other needed improvements.

It was therefore resolved to apply for an Act of Parliament to make the voluntary assessment a regular legal rate, recoverable by statute, under pains and penalties in the usual way. As this was the first enactment made by the Legislature in reference to the affairs of the town, and as its preamble gives a view of the public works and improvements projected at the time, the following quotation is made therefrom :—

Whereas, the town of Greenock is very advantageously situated on the banks of the river Clyde for carrying on both foreign and coasting trade, and whereas the Superior of the said town, with the inhabitants thereof, did, in the year 1705, begin to raise money by a voluntary subscription for building a harbour, and some progress hath from time to time been made in the erection of same, but the produce of the said subscription has been found insufficient to answer that purpose, and to defray the expense of cleansing the said harbour; and whereas the building of a Church, Town-house, Poor and School-houses, and Market places for meal and flesh, and also a Public Clock, are extremely necessary and much wanted in the town, but the inhabitants thereof are not able to raise money to answer the expenses thereof without the aid of Parliament, the managers of the said town of Greenock, with consent of Sir John Shaw, Baronet, the superior, do therefore humbly beseech your Majesty, with the advice of Lords and Commons in present Parliament assembled, that it be enacted, and be it enacted, that from and after the first day of June, 1751, for the period of thirty one years, and to the end of the next session of Parliament thereafter,

there shall be laid an imposition or duty of two pennies Scots, or one sixth part of a penny sterling, upon every Scots pint of ale and beer that shall be either brought in, brewed, tapped, or sold within the said town of Greenock, and baronies of Easter and Wester Greenock and Finnart, or the liberties thereof, and that the said duty shall be paid or made payable by the brewers for sale or vendors or sellers of all such ale and beer, to the Trustees to be nominated and appointed for cleaning, deepening building, and repairing of the said harbours and piers, and for building a new church, town-house, poor and school-houses, and market-places, and also a public clock, and for putting in execution all other powers in and by this Act given.

The passing of this Act and the great increase of the trade of the town compelled Sir John to face the question of taking a more direct responsibility himself in the management of affairs, or giving more ample powers to the trustees and feuars than they had hitherto possessed. He decided on the latter, and in 1751 he granted two additional charters, the first dated Sauchie Lodge, 10th April, 1751, and the second dated Drummorie, in East Lothian, the seat of his brother-in-law, Hew Dalrymple, one of the senators of the College of Justice, 2nd September of the same year. These charters are progressive in their powers as well as in their dates, the last being the Act under which the town of Greenock was brought to the state of prosperity in which it was found by the Act of Reform in 1834.



## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XVII.

The Municipal Act passed in 1750 duly came into operation on the first day of June, 1751. As it did not much increase the power of the people in respect to the management of the funds discontent still existed, and on occasions made itself felt. This seems to have suggested to Sir John the necessity of giving still greater powers to the feuars than had yet been conceded. Accordingly, on the 2nd day of September, 1751, while staying at the Mansion House of Drummore with Sir Hew Dalrymple, to whom Greenock is indebted not a little, he granted a new charter in which feuars, sub-feuars, and burgesses to be afterwards admitted were to meet yearly to elect the Magistrates and Town Council. There were to be nine in all—two Bailies, a Treasurer, and six Councillors, with power to the said Bailies and their successors in office to administer justice to the inhabitants; and to the Bailies, Treasurer, and Town Council to manage the funds and common

good of the town and barony, to make laws for the better government of the same, to admit burgesses on payment of not more than thirty merks Scots, and generally to use and exercise all privileges and jurisdictions as freely as the Magistrates and Town Council of any other burgh of barony in Scotland—the Baron Bailie for the time being to have a cumulative jurisdiction with the bailies to be chosen by the inhabitants. This charter gave Greenock, nearly a century before, almost as great privileges as the Burgh Reform Bill of 1834 gave to the rest of Scotland, and manifests very clearly the enlightened and liberal spirit which characterised Sir John Shaw. In most other burghs elections were at this period managed on the close system, according to which town councillors elected their successors, but this charter placed the power entirely in the hands of the people. A provision in the charter gave the people not only the power of electing the town councillors, but of saying which of them were to be magistrates, a right of which they were dispossessed in 1834. This provision was a most excellent one, and it were well if it still existed, as it prevented elections of the Magistrates by small cliques and cabals among Town Councillors, which often create irritation and heart burning among those who are expected to work

together for the common good. The charter is all in all well deserving of being handed down to posterity, and should these observations be afterwards published in a more complete form, as they probably may, a copy of it will, along with some other documents to be referred to, be put in the appendix for preservation.

Although the Act of Parliament gave power to impose a tax of two pennies Scots on the pint of ale in place of the old voluntary cess, there was a considerable falling off in the revenue derived therefrom. This was brought about by various causes, which it may be well to notice here, as it shows the state of opinion in Scotland in reference to some of the public questions of that time. One prominent cause of the deficiency of the local ale tax was the imposition of an Imperial tax on malt of threepence per bushel, which was calculated to produce £20,000 per annum, a large amount to be added to the taxation of Scotland. This tax was imposed against the almost unanimous votes and remonstrances of the Scottish members, backed by the voice of the country, and when it was passed it excited quite a ferment. Patriotic Scotchmen who believed their country had been over-reached in the matter of taxation at the Union, vowed that they would rather give up drinking ale altogether

than have their country robbed by such a tax, and many actually carried their threat into effect. Government had at first intended the tax should be sixpence, but the indignation and bad feeling it produced caused them to withdraw the bill and introduce one with the lower rate. The passing of this Act caused great discontent in Greenock, not only because the people equally with their brethren throughout Scotland believed it was a breach of the Act of Union to impose such a tax against the wishes of the whole people, but because it was calculated to injure, and did injure, the chief source of their local revenue. Their discontent, however, began and ended in grumbling, but in Glasgow it led to a formidable riot.

Daniel Campbell, of Shawfield, Member of Parliament for Glasgow, who was almost the only Scotch member who supported the bill, was suspected of having communicated to Government not only the information which was necessary for the laying on of this obnoxious malt tax, but also specific information regarding the evasion of tobacco duties. He was himself a wealthy and enterprising Glasgow merchant, and was regarded with jealousy by his fellow citizens as being one of the few who had been benefited by the Union and the opening up of the English colonies to Scotch traders. When the day approached for

laying on the tax Mr Campbell became apprehensive that an attack would be made on his mansion-house, and sent a deputation to Edinburgh asking that a detachment of military be sent at once to Glasgow. They were accordingly sent, but this movement instead of overawing only irritated the populace, as they looked on it as an attempt to coerce the country.

The first day had passed quietly, as the soldiers had not then arrived, but when, on the following day, they made their appearance, the people became infuriated, and marching to Shawfield House speedily wrecked and set it on fire, while Mr Campbell, thinking the danger past, was enjoying his supper with the Magistrates in the Town House. Hearing of the riot, the commander of the soldiers came to the Provost and Magistrates for instructions to operate against the rioters, but they, probably sympathising to some extent in the opinion of the people and unwilling that there should be any bloodshed, refused consent. The crowd were therefore allowed to disperse to their homes without any measures being taken for the apprehension of the ringleaders. The next day a crowd assembled near the guard-house where the soldiers were stationed and hooted and threw stones at them until their patience was exhausted, when they fired, killing eight persons. Immediately a cry rose that the



soldiers were slaughtering the inhabitants, and the crowd increased tenfold, and rushing to a magazine where arms were kept they provided themselves with the means of self-defence and vengeance. The Provost, seeing the soldiers were likely to be torn in pieces by the mob, urged them to retreat to Dumbarton Castle, which they did with great difficulty, the mob following and firing on them with deadly effect.

When the celebrated Duncan Forbes of Culloden, who had a short time before been appointed Lord-Advocate, and was then in Edinburgh, heard of the riot, he set out for Glasgow with seven troops of dragoons, a regiment of foot, an independent Highland company, and a field piece. On arriving in Glasgow he immediately made an investigation into the cause of the outbreak, and had several of the ringleaders apprehended. As he thought the remissness of the Magistrates in not checking the rioters at once had been the main cause of the defiance of the law and the loss of life that had ensued, he carried off the refractory Bailies to the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, where they were imprisoned for some time, the Lord Advocate refusing to admit them to bail. Having petitioned the Court of Justiciary on this point, however, the Court ordered them to be admitted to bail, and they returned to Glasgow

amid popular demonstrations of triumph. It may be here mentioned that Shawfield received £9,000 of compensation for the loss occasioned by the riot, and with this sum he purchased the island of Islay from Campbell of Calder, a cadet of the Argyll family and ancestor to the Earl of Cawdor, to whom it had, along with the island of Jura, been granted on the forfeiture of the Macdonalds. As showing the great increase in the value of land, it may be stated that Mr Morrison, the present proprietor of the greater part of Islay, paid £452,000 for the same estate for which Campbell of Shawfield gave £9,000 a century previous.

The opposition to the malt tax was carried on in Edinburgh in a different way. The Court of Session, at the instigation of the Lord Advocate, issued regulations regarding the price of ale with a view to prevent the brewers charging more than was needful to make up for the tax as if lawyers were better fitted to decide upon a question of trade than the brewers and purchasers. The brewers met and agreed to stop brewing rather than comply with the regulations, but Duncan Forbes was equally resolute that the brewing should go on, and threatened to indict them for conspiracy unless they opened their breweries. Under this threat the brewers

yielded, and adopted the regulations. When these important cities were obliged to submit to the tax the rest of the country speedily followed. A large additional staff of excise officers had, however, to be introduced from England for the purpose of enforcing the tax. These men, who were in many cases most unscrupulous, and had been selected for the business because it was so unpopular, soon made themselves most obnoxious, and rabbling the excisemen became a frequent offence in Greenock as well as other towns. The current opinion, even in England, regarding these men—whom Lockhart describes as the “scum and cagnalia” of that country—is indicated by the following anecdote :—A Scots merchant who was travelling in England had put up at an inn on the road. He had a considerable sum of money in his saddle bags, and was much afraid of highwaymen, it being a part of the country much frequented by them. He expressed his fears to the landlady, who told him he need give himself no concern, as the highwaymen were now all gone. “Gone where?” he inquired. “Why truly they are gone to your country to be excisemen.”

The malt tax being thus imposed in opposition to the feelings and interests of the people, the consumption of ale fell off considerably, but there were other agencies at work which

more directly affected the consumption. The use of tea, which has already been referred to, was one of these agencies, and not less so was the introduction of aqua vitæ or whisky. This drink was comparatively unknown in Greenock until after the rebellion. When it was finally crushed on Culloden field, the Government resolved to prevent further risings of the Highlanders by lessening the power of the chiefs, and this they sought to do by abolishing hereditary jurisdictions. When the object of having a numerous body of retainers was done away by this means, their numbers, considering the backwardness of agriculture, was found to be a disadvantage rather than an advantage to the chiefs. It therefore became their interest to reduce the numbers, which they frequently did in ways that were not very justifiable, more especially when the clanship tenure, by which they held the land, is taken into account. As a consequence, the Highlanders crowded into the large towns for employment, and the rising port of Greenock was quite inundated with them. As was to be expected, they, along with the Gaelic, introduced usages of a more questionable character, and among such was the drinking of whisky. Being accustomed in the Highlands to this liquor, which they called usquebagh, and being of opinion that it was a medicine that cured all the ills of life, they

naturally desired to continue its use. The demand soon created supply, and speedily small public-houses, the patronymic of whose owners unhesitatingly betrayed their origin, began to supplant the ale-houses, and did so to the loss and injury of the town revenue. For many years the chief retailers of this liquor in Greenock were Highlanders, and as a consequence their countrymen suffered more from the curse of drink than the other inhabitants. Now, however, they have largely given place to Irishmen, and as a curious coincidence, if not a consequence, Irishmen now seem to suffer more from the effects of drink than any other part of the population.

About the year 1760 the Highlanders numbered a half of the whole population, and as they are still very numerous in town, it may not be amiss to quote the opinion of a gentleman who had many opportunities of observing their conduct—

The Highlanders in general are kind and hospitable to strangers. To this virtue besides other inducements many of them have the powerful motive suggested by the Jewish Legislator. They know the heart of strangers, having been strangers themselves. One may at times walk from one end of Greenock to the other passing many people and many people passing them without hearing a word of any language but Gaelic. Of this their native tongue, which is copious and highly expressive, the Highlanders are amazingly fond. They seem all to be orators. Like the French, and some other nations,

they accompany the artificial with what has been termed natural language, significant looks, motions of the hands and gesticulations of the body. It is not uncommon with the poorest people from the Highlands to boast of their descent from some great family or another, and it is pleasant to observe that a reflection which would be painful to others in their circumstances, affords no small consolation to them. They are not so wealthy as their neighbours, but to compensate, and more than compensate this, they are of very honourable extraction.

It were well if those who when a Highlander is speaking and he moves his hand and gesticulates with his body think he is angry would give heed to the above extract, which shows that these are natural motions, characteristic of the race rather than mere ebullitions of temper as they are sometimes uncharitably supposed.

To show how largely the population in the end of the last century was made up of Highlanders, it may be stated that in 1792, out of a population of 15,000, the number of heads of families born in Argyllshire was 1,433, in the shire of Bute 78, and in the northern counties 314, so that there were in Greenock 1,825 heads of families out of a total of 3,387 born in the Highlands, or more than a half of the whole; and if to that number those of Highland descent, but born in Greenock, were taken into account, three-fourths of the population were connected with the Highlands of Scotland.



## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XVIII.

On the 9th day of September, 1751, the feuars and sub-feuars met to confirm the election of the Councillors, Treasurer, and Bailies, in terms of the Charter, when the following, who had previously been named in the new Act, were duly confirmed as the first Magistrates and Town Councillors of Greenock :—

Bailies:

John Alexander, Robert Donald.

Treasurer:

James Butcher.

Councillors:

W. Gammill, Robert Rae,  
James Warden, James Watt,  
Gabriel Mathie, Nathan Wilson.

At one of the first meetings thereafter—viz., 28th September—a petition was presented to the Magistrates and Town Council from the brewers and victuallers representing that the tax of two pennies Scots, in addition to the Government duty, was too high, and asking

that a meeting of the feuars and sub-feuars be convened, so that they might lay their grievance before them, and ask a reduction of the cess to one shilling per barrel, as had already been allowed in Glasgow, Irvine, and Borrowstoness. The Town Council were unwilling to make any reduction, as they intended considerable improvements on the harbours, but having called the meeting, as requested in the petition, the friends of the brewers mustered in great force and carried a resolution in favour of a reduction, which was accordingly made. At the same meeting instructions were given to the treasurer, James Butcher, to pay £200 to Lord Cathcart as entry for the harbour feus, which had now become the property of the town, the Corporation receiving the dues with the exception of the anchorage, shore, and ring dues, which were still retained by the Superior. On 17th January, 1752, a committee reported that they had agreed with David Caton to undertake the building of town cellars and breasts for the harbours for the sum of £327, but if stones were allowed to be taken from the town quarries, which were situated where the Slaughterhouse is now, a deduction of £35 was to be made therefor. The Breast here referred to was that from the Mid Quay westward to the West Quay Lane, and the



cellars were built on a line with the premises now occupied by Messrs Andrew Fairgrieve & Son, plumbers (formerly Brownlie, Buchanan & Co.), which formed a part of them.

At a meeting held on the 3rd February of the same year the treasurer stated that the funds were coming in too slowly to meet the outlay being incurred for the harbour and other town improvements, and that he was already considerably in advance therefor. The Town Council, therefore, resolved that Bailie Donald should proceed to Glasgow and have an interview with the managers of the New Banking Company of Glasgow and endeavour to arrange for a cash credit of £1,000 on the security of the ale tax. Bailie Donald accordingly proceeded to Glasgow by the packet, and having safely arrived at the Broomielaw, he duly presented himself in the Bank parlour. After holding sundry communings the Bank agreed to give the cash credit provided the Magistrates and Town Council became personally liable as additional security. Bailie Donald having reported to that effect, the Town Council demurred to the personal obligation sought to be imposed on them, and as they were of opinion that the tax was ample security of itself, they instructed Bailie Alexander to consult an eminent lawyer in Edinburgh as to whether it was absolutely necessary to bind themselves for the loan in addi-

tion to the security of the cess. The counsel selected by Bailie Alexander was Alexander Lockhart, advocate, who gave as his opinion that personal security could be dispensed with. He recommended, however, that a bond in a particular form—a scroll of which he forwarded—should be granted, pledging the tax and agreeing therein that the collector should pay over the receipts from same direct to the Bank. This having satisfied the New Banking Company of Glasgow, the cash credit for £1,000 was duly granted. To make sure that all the ale brewed and sold within the burgh should be duly assessed, the treasurer, now Mr W. Gammell, was instructed to pay John Thomson, the Government collector of Excise, the sum of four pounds sterling for an extract from his books of the amount of ale brewed and sold, and the names of the brewers and victuallers brewing or selling same, for the use of the town collector.

In these days, when incidents connected with banking companies are in everybody's mouth, it may not be out of place to relate one which happened in connection with the first public banking company of Glasgow (afterwards called the Ship Bank). It was started only a few months before the New Banking Co. (afterwards called the Glasgow Arms Bank), with which the Corporation of Greenock first did banking business.

Early in this century, on an evening in the month of October, there came into the Eagle Inn, Maxwell Street, Glasgow, a dashing sort of a gentleman, dressed in black, with his left arm resting in a silken string across his breast, and his head finely powdered, as was the case with the nobility and gentry of these days. He announced himself as Sir Thomas Maitland, Admiral of the Royal Navy, and requested a suite of apartments, saying that his valet would arrive from Greenock on the following day with his luggage. Mr Boniface of the hotel was only too glad to receive such a distinguished visitor—

Down to the ground  
He bowed profound—

and in the course of the evening, after participating in the good things of this life which the "Eagle" bountifully supplied, the Admiral gave orders that a hairdresser should be brought to shave and powder him early on the following morning, and that a carriage and pair should be ready for him to drive through the city precisely at eleven o'clock. The Admiral's wishes were punctually complied with, and after breakfast the following day, he, powdered and perfumed, entered his carriage and drove to the Bank, where he asked for Mr Michael Rowand, the manager. Producing a draft for £90 on Smith, Payne & Smith of

London, he asked if he could be supplied with the money, as in travelling he had run short of funds. Mr Rowand had a rigid rule never to discount bills to any individuals, however eminent they might be, without having an introduction from a known customer.

"Did Sir Thomas know any Glasgow gentleman to whom he could refer for inquiry?"

"Oh yes," replied the Admiral, "I know the Rev. Dr M'Lean of the Gorbals."

"Very good," says Mr Rowand. "Then if you please to take the trouble and drive across in your carriage, by the Stockwell Bridge, and just get the Doctor to put his name down on the back of the draft, you will get the money on your return with much pleasure."

Away the Admiral rattled in his carriage to the Gorbals, and rapped at the door of the Kirk-Session House, in Buchan Street. There was nobody there, which he knew very well, so he ordered the carriage to be wheeled to the Wheat Sheaf Tavern, kept by Mrs Paterson and a famous tavern it was in these days. On getting into the Wheat Sheaf the Admiral called for brandy and water, pen, ink, and paper, and these being supplied to him and the reckoning paid, he stepped once more into the carriage and drove to the Bank, where he soon presented his draft, *de novo*, with the name of the Rev. Dr M'Lean duly subscribed on the back of it. Mr Rowand, on seeing the rev. doctor's indorsation, soon gave

the money, and escorted the Admiral to his carriage—an honour which he rarely conferred on a customer—who drove back to the Eagle Inn. Arriving there, he ordered a sumptuous dinner to be ready for himself and two or three friends at half-past four, then the fashionable hour for dining in Glasgow, and, in the meantime, went out, as he said, to do some shopping. The dinner was, of course, piping hot at the proper time, and the host and his waiters in readiness, but back to the inn the bold Admiral never returned.

During the afternoon Mr Buchanan, a keen, sharp-eyed clerk of the bank, while making up his London despatches, was much dumfounded by the appearance of the £90 draft discounted by the Admiral, some of the words being grossly mis-spelt, and the writing and style altogether unbecoming an Admiral. A consultation was held as to whether it could be a genuine draft from Admiral Sir Thomas Maitland or not. The law agent for the bank was immediately sent for, and he at once gave it as his opinion that there was something wrong with the draft, but suggested that Dr M'Lean should be visited. On the draft being shewn to him the doctor looked at it with some amazement. He said he had not the honour of knowing the Admiral, and that the name on the back of the discounted draft was not

his—it was a forgery. Immediately all the beagles in Glasgow were put on the trace of the *soi-disant* Admiral, and every inn and tavern in the city was searched for information. At last it was discovered that he had gone into the house of a Mrs Cullen at the Broomielaw and washed off the fine scented hair powder put on it by the deacon of the barbers, and after some other adjustments had sailed that afternoon from the Broomielaw for the Highlands. Officers were sent in pursuit, and he was caught near Inverness and brought back handcuffed to Glasgow. He there confessed that his real name was Donald Davidson, and that he was a discharged soldier who had lost his left arm at the siege of Badajoz under Wellington. He was in due course placed at the bar of the Court of Justiciary charged with “falsehood, fraud, and wilful imposition,” and the draft was produced in evidence, of which the following is a copy :—

Glasgow, 30th October, 1821.

£90 sterling.

At sieght pay to me or my order the sum of ninty pounds sterling, which place to the debiet of my account.

THOMAS MAITLAND, Baronet, K.C.B.,  
Admiral, Royal Navy.

After the examination of some official witnesses, Mr Rowand, the chief witness, was

called, and put in the box. Being duly sworn he was examined for the prosecution by Mr John Hope, the Advocate-Depute. He was then cross-questioned by Mr Earle Monteith, the counsel for the prisoner, to the following effect:—

Monteith : Now, Mr Rowand, can you, upon your oath, swear that the prisoner at the bar is the man who did these things ?

Rowand (rather puzzled, but looking earnestly at the prisoner) : " He wants, you see, the powdered hair."

Advocate-Depute : Oh ! we all see that perfectly well, I should think. (Laughter.)

Mr Rowand : He wants also the bushy black whiskers down to the chin. (Laughter.)

(The prisoner had taken the precaution to get his head and his whiskers shaved before the trial.)

Monteith : You say, Mr Rowand, that the prisoner counted the notes when you gave them to him at the Bank counter ? Now, Sir, how could he count the bank notes when he wants the arm ?

Rowand : I did not know that.

Monteith : Now, step down Mr Rowand and view the Lieutenant-General at the bar. (Roars of laughter.)

Advocate-Depute (to Mr Rowand, who now re-entered the box) : Have you any doubt in your mind that the prisoner at the bar is the man you identified in the Fiscal's office ?

Rowand : I think he is, but he is greatly altered in his appearance.

Monteith : And this is the man described in the

document (gravely reading it) as the Honourable and Right Honourable Sir Thomas Maitland, K.C.B., Lieutenant-General in the British Army, and presently His Majesty's Commissioner of the Ionian Islands and Governor of Malta. (Shouts of laughter.)

Monteith: Am I correct, Mr Rowand, in stating that you went out from the bank and saw the prisoner to his carriage?

Rowand: I did see him to the door. (Laughter.)

Monteith: And after seeing him to the door did you cordially shake him by the hand, and wish him great success back again to the Ionian Islands, he having the £90 in his pocket? (Great laughter, in which the prisoner joined.)

Rowand: Exactly so.

Menteith: I have no more questions, my Lord.

As Mr Rowand left the Court he entered the Magistrates' room, and sitting down on one of the old-fashioned mahogany chairs, relics of 1715 and 1745, he said to Dr Clelland, the Town Chamberlain, "Bless me, my dear doctor, I would not for the best £100 note in the bank have been badgered and squeezed in that way. Will they hang him, do you think?" Lord Succoth summed up against the prisoner, and the jury having retired, brought in a verdict of "guilty as libelled." Lord Meadowbank, who sat on the bench with Lord Succoth, addressing his learned brother, remarked that in a commercial country like this forgery, especially in the manner it was here committed, could not be



forgiven. Some legislators had promulgated the visionary idea of extending mercy to persons guilty of the crime, but neither he nor his Lordship agreed in that opinion. The sentence was, therefore, that the prisoner be hanged. When Mr Rowand heard the sentence he was horrified, and gave himself no rest until, through the influence of the Duke of Montrose, the prisoner was respited, and the sentence commuted to transportation for life. The honest banker, notwithstanding the badgering he had got, often said that "he never would have forgiven himself had the rascal been hanged."

In April, 1752, Greenock was thrown into mourning by the death of Sir John Shaw, which took place at his seat of Sauchie, in the shire of Clackmannan. The event occurred on the 5th of that month, and his corpse having been brought to Edinburgh was on the 10th buried in the aisle of the New Church there. The following notice of his death appeared in the obituary of the *Scots Magazine* of that year :—

1752, April 5.—Died, at his seat of Sauchie Lodge, in the shire of Clackmannan, Sir John Shaw, of Greenock, Baronet. In March, 1700, he married Margaret, daughter of Sir Hew Dalrymple of North Berwick, Lord President of the Session, by whom he had issue one daughter only—Marion—who was married to the late Charles Lord Cathcart, by whom she had issue the present Charles

Shaw of Sauchie Lord Cathcart, Eleanora, the widow of Sir John Houston, and Marion Anne Cathcart, all now alive, besides several children which are deceased.

At the time of his death, Sir John had passed the allotted span of three score and ten. Lady Shaw survived her husband little more than five years, having died in October, 1757. The notice of her death in the obituary of the *Scots Magazine* is as follows :—

October 8th, 1757.—Died, at Edinburgh, Lady Shaw, widow of Sir John Shaw of Greenock. The only issue of the marriage was the mother of the present Lord Cathcart. Lady Shaw was eldest daughter of Lord President Dalrymple.

By the death of Sir John Shaw, Greenock lost one who had her prosperity deeply at heart. Although affecting considerable style and magnificence in his mode of living, and maintaining his feudal jurisdiction with great exactness, he seems at all times to have been actuated by a spirit of patriotism and enlightened liberality, which is highly to be commended. The part he took in suppressing the Rebellion of 1715 is an instance of his patriotic zeal, and the Charters given to the town in 1751 are signal instance of his enlightened liberality. When we consider the period at which these Charters were granted, the general unwillingness which men feel to resign into other hands the power which they and their ancestors have possessed,

and the universal prevalence of the close or self-election system in the Royal burghs of Scotland, this disinterested act shows him to have been far in advance of his time. Of the wisdom and sound policy of the measure, as it respects the interests of the town of Greenock, and, we may add, of his *successors in the superiority*, it is impossible to entertain a doubt. The Charter of September, 1751, may justly be regarded as the foundation-stone of the prosperity of Greenock, the privileges there bestowed having no doubt stimulated the inhabitants to make exertions for its welfare and progress, which otherwise they would not have done. And though, as we will see in due course, the right of electing their civic rulers gave rise occasionally to strong animosities, these were far more than counterbalanced by the advantages which flowed from the exercise of their privileges.

To show that Sir John's action was the outcome of a steady desire to promote the welfare of the town rather than some momentary impulse, brought about by extraneous causes, we quote the following letter, written to the Magistrates in reply to a memorial from the inhabitants, which had been forwarded to him.

Greenock House, 8th October, 1750.—Sir John Shaw, having considered the memorial from the

feuars and sub-feuars of the town of Greenock, approves extremely of the scheme they propose of building a breast of communication along the quay, with a row of cellars on the land side, and will give his consent to Lord Cathcart's sub-feuing to them the ground to the north of the inside quay, which they design to begin that work upon. As he continues to have the good of the town at heart as much as he has ever had, he is willing either to let them have a nineteen years' tack of the anchorage of the harbour at a rate which he thinks will be of assistance to the present funds of the town, or to give them so much out of the yearly anchorage and to give them permission to build cranes and weigh-houses in such places as shall be judged necessary, with a full right to the dues that will arise from them, which he expects with the present funds will be more than sufficient for the present and future cleaning of the harbours and quays, to which it ought to be immediately applied. He recommends to the town to build the intended breast and cellars in the same manner as they propose to build the church, and as the cellars in the Royal Close yield 10 per cent. interest for the money expended in building them, it is hoped it will not be difficult to find the sum necessary for that purpose, which in the course of years coming to be paid off there will continue to arise a constant increase in the town's revenue.

*Sir John recommends to the feuars with the greatest earnestness, to consider with attention all possible means of increasing their funds, and of finding out others, that public works may be kept up with solidity when executed, and undertaken with expedition when found necessary for the future, which they will find the most valuable advice can be given them.*

Sir John expects that the feuars will immedi-

ately renew the assessments on malt for fifteen years after the expiration of the present contract, and that they will strengthen it with all additions they possibly can.

JOHN SHAW.





## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XIX.

It has not been left to the present generation to discover the value of the Charter granted by Sir John Shaw. At the time of the great struggle for Reform in the early part of the century, the franchise possessed by Greenock was often cited as a precedent worthy of being followed. Our ancestors themselves were also quite cognisant of the privileges which they had, as compared with other communities, and on that account revered the memory of their author. They did nothing, however, towards showing in any tangible form their appreciation of his enlightened and liberal conduct until 1825. In that year a meeting of the leading inhabitants was held to consider the matter, and, after various projects were discussed, it was ultimately agreed that, if Lord Cathcart consented, a copy of Sir John's portrait, painted by some eminent artist, should be obtained and placed in a public position where the people might have an opportunity of forming some idea of the

man who had been such a benefactor to the town. The undernoted were the subscribers to the portrait :—

John Fairrie.	William Macfie.
Andrew Ramsay.	Walter Baine.
Robert Baine.	Adam Fairrie.
Robert Steele.	Archibald Baine.
John Rodger.	George Williamson.
John Macfie.	Andrew Anderson.
David Balderston.	Alexander Rodger.
James C. Buchanan.	Dr W. W. Buchanan.
Thomas Lang.	John Denniston.
Neil Leitch.	David Crawford.

The following letter by Bailie Macfie of Langhouse (father of Mr Robert Macfie of Airds) explains the matter so fully that we deem it but proper to insert it here. This letter was addressed to the subscribers to the Coffee Room, Cathcart Square, and a copy of it is framed and hung beside the portrait referred to. It is as follows :—

*To the Gentlemen Resorting to the Public Reading-Room of the Town of Greenock.*

Greenock, 19th April, 1842.

Gentlemen,—For some time past the walls of your Reading Room have been graced with a portrait of the late Sir John Shaw, of Greenock, Baronet. If by the exhibition of this portrait of the founder of the town of Greenock publicity were alone sought, I am not aware that it could be deposited in any other place more appropriately than in the centrally situated and tasteful chamber in Cathcart Square, which is the daily resort of the

most respectable inhabitants of the burgh ; but as there was another object in view in obtaining, and so disposing of this piece of art, I take leave, on behalf of the survivors of the individuals whose names are subjoined, as well as for myself, to state briefly what that object was—how the portrait was procured, and at whose expense :—The gentlemen to whom I refer, and other respectable inhabitants of the town, having observed with regret that no public monument dedicated to the memory of Sir John existed in the town of Greenock, and feeling desirous, if possible, in some way to supply so apparent an omission, in 1825 authorised two of their number (Messrs James Ramsay and John Fairrie), then connected with the administration of the affairs of the Corporation, to make an application to the late venerable Lord Cathcart, to ascertain whether he possessed a portrait of his maternal ancestor, and if so, whether he would permit a copy of it to be taken and hung in one of the public rooms of the town. His Lordship, in reply, not only stated that he had a portrait of Sir John, but having in the most obliging manner signified his readiness to place it in the hands of an artist to be copied for the purpose I have mentioned, it was without loss of time consigned to the care of Thomas Phillips, Esq. (afterwards Sir Thomas Phillips, R.A.), an eminent portrait painter, then residing at No. 8 George Street, Hanover Square, London, by whom the copy, so long submitted to the view of the public, was made. It was not till 1836, and in consequence of a letter addressed to the Provost of Greenock from Lord Cathcart respecting the portrait—when my respected friend Mr Ramsay was dead, and Mr Fairrie had removed to London—that the original painting and the copy were obtained from Mr



Phillips by the latter, and sent down to Greenock. The original was returned to Lord Cathcart with suitable acknowledgments, and the copy placed where it now is. This specimen of the fine arts, combining fidelity in resemblance to the original, with elegance and skill in the execution, it is now my pleasing duty, in obedience to the request, and in the name of the survivors of the gentlemen to whom I have referred, to present to you as a permanent ornament of your Reading Room, being fully persuaded that my friends and myself have your cordial concurrence in the feelings of gratitude which have actuated us in paying this public but inadequate testimony of respect to the memory of a patriotic individual, to whom, as well personally as by the liberal grants made by him, the Burgh of Greenock owes its advancement in something less than a century from a fishing village of 4,000 to a commercial community of little less than 40,000 inhabitants.—I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, your very obedient, humble servant,

WILLIAM MACFIE.

This portrait still ornaments the Reading Room, and any who may be interested in seeing a likeness of the man who, as Mr Macfie states, was really the founder of Greenock, can do so by visiting it.

Sir John, as we have stated, was given to greater style and magnificence than his predecessors. As marking this, he had a coach built for himself something of the style of a State carriage or the Lord Mayor's coach, gorgeous outside with red paint, and inside with crimson velvet and silver lace. The

coach was drawn by six fat, long-tailed horses, having four outriders; and when Sir John and Lady Shaw made their annual visit to Edinburgh they were accompanied by a body of armed retainers on horseback, while running footmen with the long leaping poles of office heralded their progress. The equipage, thus accompanied, painfully covered its way to the Scottish capital. The roads were still very indifferent, although much improved since General Wade had given the country lessons in roadmaking when forming the central highways through the Highlands, and it took three mortal days to accomplish the journey.

After Sir John's death this coach was placed in a shed erected in the deer park, near the Mansion-house, and the following interesting circumstances in connection with it were narrated by a venerable lady, the grandmother of Mr Colin Lamont of the Union Bank, who kindly furnished the writer with the same:—

“In my (Mrs Lamont's) early days the paling and hedge surrounding the Mansion-house ran eastward at the back of the Royal Closs and along the line of Chapel Street, near where stood the residence of Bailie Roger Stewart, before it was swept away by the formation of the Caledonian Railway Coal Depot. There was a latch and turnstile in the paling similar to the one which existed at the Back Walks, but much smaller. By this way access was given to a footpath that

traversed the Deer Park to the Back Walk, and by that avenue gained the Mansion-house. Near this stile was a shed where the deer used to be fed and housed in the winter, and under this shed reposed the ancient family chariot of the Laird of Greenock, dosing over the remembrances of its former glories, but now in squalid and melancholy ruin. Being allowed access to the Deer Park, I, along with the companions of my childish days, often played at 'wee houses' and received company in great state in the ancient chariot, still clad internally with the rags of its ruby velvet linings and silver lace trimmings. Familiarity too often breeds contempt, and in our case, if it did not do that, it all events took away the natural awe inspired by the stately and gorgeous machine and its traditions; for in its day it was the wonder of town and country, as we had been told. Fear having thus departed, we by-and-by began to use the remainder of the velvet and silver lace to dress our dolls, and soon every shred of it was utilised. The last time I saw the coach was near the close of last century, and then this monument of magnificence and pride had fallen so low that in its recesses hens laid their eggs, and chanticleer saluted the morning perched on its huge-domed roof, unabashed and unreprieved."

Looking at the fate of the chariot one is ready to exclaim with Hamlet—

"To what base uses we may return, Horatio."

"Imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,  
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away."

Travelling from Greenock to Glasgow was in Sir John's days by Kilmalcolm, the road through Port - Glasgow by the

sea shore not being made until 1768. The road to Gourrock was then a mere track by the sea shore, and if strong gales produced a high tide an embargo was laid on all travellers until the weather moderated. When the Gourrock Road was made it was at the cost of the Greenock Corporation, who expended about £15,000 on the two roads to Inverkip and Kelly. The change after these new roads were made was as marked as in the case of those executed by General Wade himself, regarding whose performances in that line the following naïve couplet was written :—

Had you seen these roads before they were made,  
You would hold up your hands and bless General  
Wade.

The expenditure of the Corporation in making these country roads should long ago have been repaid by the Road Trustees, but they have rarely paid the full interest of the debt, let alone the principal. It is to be hoped, however, that, now the Roads and Bridges Bill of 1877 has become law and a new mode of maintaining the roads been introduced, the debt due the town of Greenock may be honourably paid.

In 1752 William Street—which was then called the New Street—was partly opened up, and a shed erected for holding the “Water Works.” As David Caton was

delaying the building of the town cellars, it was, on 12th April, 1753, agreed to take them from him, and give them to Reid & Ewing, masons, "the price to be six pounds sterling per rood for rough and ashlar work overhead, everything to be provided by the contractors except scaffolding, which the town was to provide." Under Reid & Ewing the work proceeded apace, and when near completion the Town Council resolved, for the convenience of the inhabitants, to place a belfry and clock on the cellars. This was carried into effect, and a bell, weighing 2 cwt. 3 qrs. and 2 lbs., was provided; the cost, at 1s 2d per pound, being £18 1s 8d. A clock with four hands was also got from Mr Jordan, watchmaker, Glasgow, and placed on the steeple at the Bell Entry, where it remained as the only public clock of the town until the spire was erected at the Mid Parish Church, when a clock was placed in it also.

On the Breast between the Mid and West Quays being completed, it was largely occupied by herring barrels, to the exclusion of other traffic, and now and again complaints were made against the fishcurers on that account. The houses on the south side of Lindsay's Lane, which lane runs from the Vennel to the West Quay Lane, then fronted the Breast, the larger tenements now fronting the Breast not being built. But although

the space was so much larger than it is now, it was all taken up by the herring trade, and in consequence the Magistrates were obliged to pass an order to confine it as much as possible to the West Quay and the west of the Vennel. In course of time the space was found too small, and gradually the trade began to extend up a new street near the head of the West Quay, which on that account was called the "Herring Street" (now Charles Street). Several fishcurers and coopers had their works in that neighbourhood, and the din of heading and hooping barrels was heard continuously from daylight to dark during the fishing season.

In 1750 the herring trade received a considerable impetus by the bounty of thirty shillings per ton granted to the fishing vessels, which bounty was in 1757 increased to fifty shillings. In 1784, the first year in which reliable statistics were published, there were belonging to Greenock engaged in the herring fishing 300 vessels, with a total of 10,120 tons, and employing upwards of 1,000 men. In 1791 there were exported from Greenock to America, and the Continent 45,054 barrels, besides the herrings which were sold for home consumption. Before the bounty was granted there had been a tax of sixteen shillings and eightpence payable by every fishing boat that

wetted her nets, whether herrings were caught or not, which was a great drawback and a cause of much discontent ; but on the tax being abolished and the bounty granted the trade took a decided start for the better. The following account, written in the close of the 17th century, by Principal Dunlop of Glasgow University, of the approach of the herrings during the fishing season, is so graphic and interesting that we cannot forbear quoting it:—

The herrings come together as if they were under some government of their own, and swim with a great deal of order as an army marching in battle array. They enter the Firth of Clyde from the Mull of Kintyre yearly, sometime in June or July. When they first enter they frequently come amongst the coast of Argyll and enter the lochs, and take some time before they settle their principal residence. They come so throng that they are not visible to the fishers, but in calm weather they will swell and move the very ocean. They have sometimes found them on the coast of Galloway and Carrick about Ballantrae, but more frequently in the lochs on Argyll side and within Clyde at Greenock, and as far up as Ardmore, some of them coming to the freshes near Dumbarton, and are taken in the yares, but these are not reckoned the best for salting. When the shoal of herrings enters the firth the fishers gather in such number that 500 or 600 boats have been seen together in one place at the take, and all these have been seen to load their boats in a day or two. The herrings will sometime continue till December and January,

from June or July. The chief time is in July, and harvest quarter for fishing and making.

In October, 1752, there was the largest take of herrings ever known off Greenock and Port-Glasgow. A large crowd of vessels were engaged in the fishery. The herrings came up the river in such shoals that in one morning Captain Noble, of Farm, caught in his yare to the value of twenty guineas and upwards, which must have been a large sum in those days.







## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XX.

As previously stated, Lady Shaw survived her husband for upwards of five years, and died at Edinburgh on 8th October, 1757. She seems to have been a lady of considerable energy and force of character, and was well fitted for the position she occupied in the times in which she lived. The vigour she displayed during her husband's absence with the army in 1715 in raising a body of volunteers to go in pursuit of Rob Roy and his caterans, exemplified this very markedly, and the same determination to carry out what she believed to be right is oftener than once illustrated in matters connected with the burgh. Even when, looking at the matter from this distance of time, the reasonableness of her procedure seems to admit of challenge, something can always be said in favour of the course she adopted. For example, when the managers of the town funds, about the year 1732, applied for ground to build cellars or stores to accommodate the sugar trade she

interfered to prevent them getting ground except on the east side of the Mid Quay, a place which one of the inhabitants writing about at the time characterises as "a place of nastiness, not at all frequented by boats." As the managers refused to build on this site it was nearly twenty years later before they got the ground they wanted, and built the cellars. That her ladyship had in view the desirableness of planting the stores there for the purpose of getting rid of the "place of nastiness" is undoubted, but how far she was justified in keeping back such a desideratum as the stores would at that time have been for such a reason, we can scarcely now determine. It gave great umbrage to the people, however, and nearly brought about the discontinuance of the voluntary tax on malt.

On the whole, although like the rest of her sex she was somewhat fond of her own way, she generally had the good sense to be guided by those who knew the local circumstances and feelings better than she did, even when their opinions were contrary to her judgment. This was especially the case in regard to the building of the new church. Sir John had promised to give a site for a church in the gardens fronting the Mid Quay (at that time the upper part of William Street and Cathcart Square was occupied by gardens), and had given orders to take the dimensions of

the new church at Port-Glasgow as a model of the one to be built at Greenock. This was done, and he seemed to be pleased with it, and the managers daily expected that he would come and lay off the ground. He delayed doing so, however, and as the people could not nearly be accommodated in the old church, a great grumbling arose, and some of the brewers and feuars entered into a compact in the absence of Sir John and Lady Shaw to take instruments against their being subject to the burden of the tax any longer since they could not have liberty to lay out the proceeds thereof in a design so manifestly for the good of the town. In 1734, when Sir John and Lady Shaw had returned to Greenock, a gentleman, believed to be one of the elders of the parish, wrote her Ladyship in regard to the existing discontent and the cause of it. He afterwards referred to his doing so in a letter addressed to Lord Cathcart, a copy of which was recently discovered and published by ex-Provost Neill, from which the following is an extract :—

After Sir John and Lady Shaw came to Greenock, I thought it my duty to acquaint Lady Shaw in a letter of the difficulty of collecting the tax on the malt, since the people seemed persuaded they were to be disappointed of another church, and begged her Ladyship to use her influence with Sir John

that before he went to London something would be done that would convince them the church was to go forward. I intimated the noise and the clamour the people were making, but did not say a body of them had joined together to take instruments of protest.

A few days after this I was told by some of the managers that had been with her about some other business that she was displeased with my letter and did not take it to be truth. They asked what I had written, and when she told them, they confirmed it, with a great deal more to the same purpose. They told me she seemed to think that I and they both were in the wrong. The next day Lady Shaw sent for me and I waited on her. She began about the letter. I told her a great deal more than I had wrote, and that the man that had collected the tax at the mill would confirm what I wrote and said. She desired me to condescend upon particular feuars, which I begged to be excused from doing. She sent immediately for the collector, who confirmed all I said, and stated the very expressions the people used. She asked him to give an account of the persons, but he declined for good reasons, which her ladyship approved. He said, however, that Bailie Alexander knew all about the complaints of the people. After I and the collector came away she sent for Bailie Alexander. He told her the mind of the whole town, save a few in conjunction with the managers, was that they should bear the tax no longer. She seemed inclined to make an example of some to end the rest. He told her it was by no means advisable, for in all probability if any hardship was offered to one on that account, it would occasion a breach that was never likely to be made up, assuring her that in his judgment nothing would

settle the people but following forth the design of building the church. On this Lady Shaw wisely forbore any resentment."

This extract shows the very special interest Lady Shaw took in questions affecting the town, and also how her better judgment controlled her feeling of resentment in connection with the foregoing matter when it was fully explained to her. In reference to this question of the Church, it will be seen in due course that Sir John and Lady Shaw were very much guided by the Presbytery in delaying to give the site, as that body desired, very reasonably we think, that a sum should be accumulated to provide a stipend for the minister before the expense of a building was entered upon. Whenever the sum of one thousand pounds had been accumulated, which it was in 1740, Sir John invested the amount in a property of his called Milligs, granting a bond for same to the managers, bearing interest at five per cent. This interest was applied towards payment of the Rev. Mr Shaw's stipend, who was appointed as assistant to the Rev. Mr Turner the following year (1741), and who had a loft fitted up at the Royal Closs, in which to conduct Sabbath services as a convenience for that end of the town. This loft was entered by an outside stair at the foot of Bogle Street, and those who assembled there

formed the nucleus of the Mid Parish congregation.

Lady Shaw not only took interest in questions generally affecting the burgh, but entered into business speculations on her own account, and seems to have been throughout what may be called a clever, managing woman. In 1719, and for some years before that date, she was owner of a fourth of a vessel trading to Virginia and the West Indies, called the "Greenock Merchant," of 176 tons burden. Her co-owners were Robert Buntine, of Ardoch, and Arthur Park and Thomas Fleming, merchants in Greenock, each partner having a fourth share. In that year (1719) the co-partners projected a voyage from Clyde to the island of Barbadoes, and from thence to Virginia, and from thence home, and employed James Crawford, shipmaster in Greenock, as master of their vessel. To induce Captain Crawford to undertake the voyage, Lady Shaw agreed to sell him a third of her share, being a twelfth share of the vessel, to be paid out of his wages and profits at the end of the voyage. Captain Crawford accordingly became master of the "Greenock Merchant," and completed the voyage, but for some cause or other, he got into a dispute with her ladyship regarding his accounts. The result was a litigation, which was carried on for some

time, but latterly it was submitted to two arbiters—George Brown and William Wallace, residing in Edinburgh—to hear parties and settle the dispute. Unfortunately, we are unable to tell what the decision was; but having fallen in with some interesting documents connected with the case, which belonged to Captain Crawford, and which have remained, along with the titles of his property, in the possession of his descendants for about 150 years, we take occasion to quote them, as throwing some light on the shipping transactions of those days, and showing how Lady Shaw was practically interested in the trade of the port, as a part owner in what is believed to have been the first Greenock-owned ship which traded to the West Indies :—

**Memorial and Claim for James Crawford, Ship-master in Greenock,**

**Against**

**Dame Margaret Dalrymple, Spouse to Sir John Shaw of Greenock, Baronet, and the said Sir John Shaw for his interest.**

The memorialist having in the month of September, 1719, purchased from Lady Shaw a twelfth part of the ship the Greenock Merchant, of Greenock, as appears by vendition signed by my Lady the 15th September, 1719. The said Lady and Robert Buntine of Ardoch, Thomas Fleming and Arthur Park, both merchants in Greenock, the

other owners of the said ship did project a voyage with the ship to the island of Barbadoes and Virginia, for which voyage it was agreed betwixt the said Lady Shaw and your memorialist that he should be concerned not only for one twelfth part of the ship which he had bought, as said is, but also for a twelfth part of the cargo both outwards and homewards, and accordingly the memorialist did, at the desire of the Lady Shaw, purchase a quantity of herrings—eleven Lasts in all—to be sent out with the said ship, amounting in value to the sum of £99 sterling, two-thirds of which herrings were on account of the Lady Shaw, and the other third on his own account, the price of which she was to advance on the memorialist's account. The memorialist did also, at the desire of Lady Shaw, pay to Robert Donald (Robert Donald was supercargo on this voyage, and is at present a merchant in Greenock) by my Lady's precept on him the sum of £3 4s 8d, as the memorialist's twelfth share of some disbursements on the cargo. There was also an account of £31 13s to John Hill for outfitting the said ship, two-thirds on account of the said Lady Shaw, and one-third for the memorialist's share of the ship for which he granted his bill. The said ship did thereafter perform her voyage under the conduct of the memorialist as master, and the outward cargo being sold abroad there was imported in return thereof a quantity of tobacco on the joint account of the owners, which tobacco was sold by Lady Shaw and the other owners, and at a clearance betwixt the Lady and them she drew both the memorialist's share and her own.

Thereafter the ship was sold by the Lady and the owners to Thomas Kennedy, of Greenhill, at Kilbarchan, for the sum of £300 sterling, and my Lady received a full fourth of the price of the said ship,



and did not account to your memorialist for his twelfth share.

The memorialist having on the voyage homewards imported as his own portage six hogsheds of tobacco, the same was also intromitted with by my Lady and sold, and the price received by her amounting to £36 9s 8d sterling.

The wages due to the memorialist for navigating the ship being fourteen months at four pounds per month did amount to £56, for which sum my Lady did take credit at clearing with the other owners of the ship, and therefore is debtor to the memorialist for the same.

The memorialist having thus stated the facts, he claims—

1. That the Lady Shaw shall account to him for the produce of his third share of the herrings, the precise cost whereof amounted to £99 sterling, in which account her Ladyship is likewise to be debited with the foresaid sum of £3 4s 8d paid by the memorialist to Robert Donald as his twelfth share of the disbursements on the cargo.

2nd. That her Ladyship shall make payment to the memorialist of her two-thirds of the foresaid sum of £31 13s sterling paid to John Hill, which amounts to £21 2s sterling.

3rd. That her Ladyship shall account to him for one-twelfth of the profits of the homeward cargo.

4th. That her Ladyship shall pay to your memorialist the sum of £25 sterling as his one-twelfth share of the price of the ship received by her.

5th. That her Ladyship shall pay to him the sum of £36 9s 8d sterling as the price of the said portage tobacco.

6th. That her Ladyship shall make payment to the memorialist of the said sum of £56 due to him as his wages, and which her Ladyship received

from the other owners—at least got credit for the same from them—at clearing the accounts of the said voyage; and in order to clear anything that is not pointed out already by the memorialist, he craves that her Ladyship may be ordained to produce the accounts between her and the other parties.

MINUTES IN THE SUBMISSION.

Edinburgh, 12th February, 1723.—The arbiters ordain that Lady Shaw give in answers to this claim before the 25th of February curt.

(Signed)

GEORGE BROWN.

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WILLIAM WALLACE.

Edinburgh, 1st March, 1723.—The arbiters, before answer, ordain both parties to exhibit upon oath all accounts or other papers in their hands relative to the matter submitted, and they allow the claimant James Crawford to examine upon oath as in an exhibition all persons in whose hands he suspects there are any vendition receipt or other writings by which he is to prove that Lady Shaw did receive the price of his share of the ship now claimed by him, and allow either party to examine upon oath such persons as they suspect have any books or accounts relative to the voyage in question for exhibiting the same, and grant commission to Mr William Wallace, one of the arbiters, for taking the oaths of the said parties and havers any time before the 5th of June next, both parties being acquainted of such examination ten days before making the same.

WILLIAM WALLACE.

GEORGE BROWN.

Edinburgh, 20th June, 1723.—John Russell, for the claimant James Crawford, represented that he had, in terms of the commission granted by the

arbiters on the 1st day of March last, intimated to Mr Robert Dalrymple, writer to the signet, as doer (agent) for Lady Shaw, that Mr Thomas Kennedy, of Greenhill, was to be examined before Mr Wallace, one of the arbiters, as to the points mentioned in the commission; that Mr Dalrymple had not attended the said examination, but that Mr Wallace had examined the said John Kennedy in terms of the said commission, and his oath was ready to be produced by the said John Russell, and he therefore craved that the arbiters would advise the case and decern for the sums which the claimant has already sufficiently instructed to be due him. Mr Dalrymple, for Sir John and Lady Shaw, alleged that my Lady had never been at Greenock since the last meeting of the arbiters, so that she had not had an opportunity of looking through her papers, and so could not give in particular answers to the claim, and, therefore, craved the arbiters would allow a competent time for that purpose.

The arbiters ordain Sir John and Lady Shaw to give in particular answers to the claim, with the whole vouchers upon which she founds the same betwixt and the twenty-second day of July next, with certification.

GEORGE BROWN.  
ROBERT WALLACE.

Her Ladyship having obtained the additional time requested, duly produced her answers; but, unfortunately, only part of them are in existence—the latter portion being torn off. The portion extant exhibits an apparently substantial defence, and is as follows:—

Answers for Lady Shaw to the Memorial and Claim given by James Crawford to the arbiters, upon the 13th July, 1723.

My Lady acknowledges she sold a third of her quarter of the ship Greenock Merchant to James Crawford, then master thereof, upon the 15th or 16th days of September, 1719, at which time there was a fitted account 'twixt my Lady and the said James, or the said account was fitted preceding the months of November or December. After James Crawford had purchased the foreshaid twelfth part of the ship from my Lady, the voyage mentioned in the memorial was projected and executed; but before the ship could sail she behoved to be outrigged, dry goods bought (whereof the owners of each quarter accepted bills for their proportions), trifles paid in ready money, herring provided for the cargo, a month's wages to the master, super-cargo and crew advanced, and such like, necessities on all voyages.

As to the outrig (the account of ropes excepted), every twelfth share came to £31 13s sterling; and so James Crawford paid the same, or gave security therefor to John Hill, late merchant in Greenock, upon his own account. My Lady Shaw having paid her share of the said outrig in money—it being the custom of owners when the outrig is laid before them in gross, either to pay in ready money or to accept bills to the furnishers for their own particular shares; and so it was in this case, that if James Crawford did pay out the £31 13s, it was upon his own account, and he can have no allowance for the two-thirds thereof from my Lady, she having paid her two-thirds of the outrig at settling these accounts. And in like manner it was with respect to the charges on the outward cargo, for if James Crawford paid Robert Donald £3 4s

8d my lady paid to said Robert Donald £8 9s 4d as her two-thirds of said expenses, conform to his stated account for the same ready to be produced. My lady acknowledges that James Crawford bought eleven Lasts of herrings put on board said ship in Clyde for part of her outward cargo, and that she gave the said James a document in writing, dated the 5th December, 1719, that she should allow him two-thirds of the price thereof, the other third being on his own account—value in all £99—whereof my Lady's part advanced by James Crawford is £66 sterling. But my Lady having before the ship sailed from Clyde purchased and paid a parcel of dry goods to the value of £61 1s 8d sterling, wherein the said James Crawford was to be one-third concerned, he therefore gave his obligation to my lady, dated the 5th December, 1719, which she is now possessed of, obliging himself to allow £20 7s 2½d as his third part of dry goods out of the £66, my lady's two-thirds part of the herrings; and by the same obligation and declaration the said James obliges himself to hold himself bound for one-third part of what beef, butter, and other goods should be shipped in Ireland by my lady's orders, and accordingly my lady having shipped on board of said ship in Ireland beef, butter, pork, tallow, and eggs, the said James is duly bound to account for my lady's two-thirds of same.

At this point the remainder of the answers are torn off, and so the complete defence cannot be given, nor can the result of the action, whether the said James or my Lady was the victor, be ascertained, but sufficient is given to show how close was the relationship then subsisting between the Mansion House and the trade of

the port, and the deep interest taken by my Lady as a Greenock shipowner, in whatever pertained to its advancement.

Looking at the influence of my Lady in all that affected the burgh at that critical period of its history, we think she was well entitled to occupy a niche in our local Temple of Fame alongside of Sir John; and we trust that the omission to have this done in 1825 may yet be rectified, and that the Reading Room or the Museum—possibly a more suitable place now—may yet have its walls adorned by a copy of my Lady's portrait, as a companion picture to that of her husband.





## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XXI.

In October, 1753, the town had borrowed the full £1,000 arranged for with the New Banking Company of Glasgow, and as they still required more money to finish the Cellars and other Contracts on hand, they resolved to borrow £200 on their own security for that purpose, and finding a lender in a Captain Andrew, of Crawfurdsdyke, they borrowed from him £150, and £50 from the managers of the Poor Sailors' Fund, granting their acceptances for these amounts at twelve months date. When these acceptances expired bonds were granted for same, and this was the first of the loans over the Corporation Trusts, which now amount to a million and a half sterling.

Since referring to the first banking transaction of the Town Council, the writer has received some interesting particulars connected with banking in Greenock through the favour of Mr John Thomson, agent of the National Bank. The information was mainly compiled

by his father, the late Mr Alexander Thomson, of Caddlehill, who for nearly 70 years occupied a foremost position in banking circles in Greenock.

The first bank with which the Town Council did business, called in the old minutes the New Banking Co., was the Glasgow Arms Bank. It was the second bank established in Glasgow, the first being the Ship Bank, and the most noted partners were—John Cochran, John Murdoch, John Glassford, Alexander Speirs, James Ritchie, and Wm. Cunningham, all men of the highest standing, the two first having been Provosts of the city three times in succession. The bank was opened on the 5th of November, 1750, and the notes bore the city arms and motto rather tastefully executed. The opening of these banks in Glasgow annoyed the two Edinburgh banks—the Bank of Scotland and the Royal Bank—very much, and they used every means to crush their young rivals. They first insisted on their giving up business under threat of their notes being protested, and when this was refused, they employed an agent named Archibald Trotter to collect as many of their notes as possible and present them at the bank for payment. This was the plan the Edinburgh banks had adopted in their feuds with each other, but it completely failed, as the Glasgow banks manfully



stood their ground, backed by public opinion, and met all demands. As a specimen of Trotter's tactics, he insisted that the Glasgow banks had no right to fix their hours of doing business, but were bound to pay their notes at any time they were presented, from seven o'clock in the morning till ten o'clock at night, and he therefore made his demands at most untimely hours. In order, therefore, to punish Trotter, some of the payments were made to him in sixpences, to his no small vexation from the time they took to count, but as silver was a legal tender he was obliged to accept them. Notwithstanding these attempts the Glasgow banks continued to prosper, and none of the Edinburgh banks established a branch in Glasgow until the year 1783, when the Royal opened an office in Hopkirk's Land, on the east side of the High Street. Their first agent was a linen draper who carried on his ordinary business on the other side of the shop, and the bank only paid a rent of two pounds ten shillings for their share of the premises.

The first bank in Greenock commenced on Monday, 25th July, 1785. It was named the Greenock Bank, and the original partners were four in number, viz.—James Dunlop, of Garnkirk; Andrew Houston, of Jordanhill; James Gammill, merchant in Greenock, partner of Messrs

James Hunter & Co., Newfoundland merchants; and James Macdowall, merchant in Glasgow, a son of Macdowall of Garthland. Their first cashier was Mr James Miller. He acted only one year, and having removed to Glasgow, he subsequently became Professor of Mathematics in the College there. The first office of the Bank was in the tenement to the west of the town buildings in Hamilton Street, up one stair. This property, which was recently acquired by the town in connection with the projected Municipal Buildings, has been best known of late as "Purdie's" property. The Bank continued in these premises until 1790, when it was removed to a tenement at the West Breast, between the Vennel and West Quay Lane, where it remained until 1820. The site of this building was on the ground filled up to form the West Breast, and the town got into a law plea with the Misses Lindsay, whose property then fronted the harbour, for selling the site to Bailie Gammill for such a purpose, and depriving them of fish and access to the harbour. The dispute was compromised by Bailie Gammill making a wide through-going entry to Lindsay Lane from the Breast, and the town causewaying the Lane at their own expense.

The bank opened a branch in Glasgow within a few days of beginning business,

and Mr Dunlop, the leading partner, acted as their agent. Mr Dunlop was then one of the principal merchants in Glasgow, and resided in the splendid edifice called the Virginia Mansion, situated at the head of Virginia Street, where the Union Bank now stands. Mr Dunlop's counting-house was attached to the mansion, and it was there that the branch of the Greenock Bank in Glasgow was first opened. Mr Dunlop transacted business in that counting-house for eight years. After his failure in 1793 the mansion was divided into small houses, and part of it was for a time occupied as a boarding-school by Mrs Candlish, mother of the celebrated Dr Candlish of the Free Church. The second Glasgow agent was Alexander Warrand, merchant, whose office was first in King Street, and afterwards under the Tontine piazzas. This locality was then the heart of mercantile bustle, the seat of the Exchange, and crowded with counting-houses, especially of underwriters. At that time the unpaid bills of the bank in Glasgow were protested by Mr David Hutcheson, the Town Clerk of Renfrew, but who had an office in the Tolbooth, and as an instance of the queerish way in which this piece of professional business was managed, Mr Warrand's clerk was accustomed to leave the bills at night with an old woman, a grocer named

Mrs Wright, who had the exclusive privilege of selling tickets for the playhouse, and who delivered these dishonoured documents when called for to a young man deputed by the notary to receive and present them.

In September, 1820, the Bank in Greenock was removed to the Exchange Buildings, Cathcart Street, where Mr Craig's shop is now, where it continued until amalgamated with the Western Bank in November, 1843. The notes bore the representation of an old oak tree, and the first issue was signed by Mr Miller, the cashier, and made payable to Mr Alexander Shannon. In 1793, which was a most disastrous year for trade, Mr Dunlop of Garnkirk, one of the leading partners of the bank, failed, and there was in consequence a severe run on the bank; but such was the confidence in Greenock in its stability, and in Bailie Gammill, the manager, that many of the most influential people in the town voluntarily came forward and endorsed the bank notes on tables placed on the quay in front of the bank, which allayed the panic, the people who had collected in crowds to demand gold for notes being quite satisfied when they got the names of the most substantial inhabitants as a guarantee that the notes would be honoured. After Mr Dunlop's

failure, new partners were introduced from time to time—among others, James Hunter, of Hunter, Robertson & Co., Bailie Robertson, John Scott, shipbuilder, and General Andrew Gammill. The second cashier was Mr Robert Caldwell Hunter, who held that office from 1786 to 1796. The third was Mr James Patten, father of the late H. T. Patten, writer, and the Messrs Patten, sugar refiners. He held office from 1796 till 1801, when he left to join the Renfrewshire Bank. The fourth and last cashier was Mr Alex. Thomson of Caddlehill, who was appointed on 16th July, 1801, and under whose prudent management the bank was successfully conducted through many perilous times for more than 42 years, until its amalgamation with the Western Bank. Mr Thomson, besides being cashier, was one of the principal partners of the bank from 1813.

The Greenock Bank transacted a large business with the West Highlands, and had branches at Rothesay, Lochgilphead, and other towns. They had also a large circulation in Cumberland, Westmoreland, and the Isle of Man.

On Sunday, 9th March, 1828, the bank was robbed by English thieves of £28,350. One of them named Henry Sanders was tried, but acquitted in September following. A graphic

and interesting account of the robbery was published a few years ago by Mr John Adam, the Town Chamberlain, under the title of the "Man with the Squint," and with his permission we may refer to the matter in some future number. It may be stated, however, that the bank recovered a large portion of the notes by a compromise with the thieves.

The bank existed 58 years, viz., from 1785 till 1843, and was the last private bank in Scotland. When the amalgamation with the Western took place, the following were the partners :—Messrs John Scott, shipbuilder, Greenock ; Charles C. Scott of Hawkhill, near Largs ; James Hunter of Hafton, Dunoon ; William Smith of Fullwood, merchant, Liverpool ; Alexander Thomson and John Thomson, bankers, Greenock.

Another bank whose headquarters were in Greenock was the Renfrewshire Bank. It began business in 1802, and its first office was in the low flat of a house in Hamilton Street, opposite the Tanwork Close (now Harvie Lane), and Mr Patten, the cashier, lived in the upper flat. The house was subsequently taken down to build the one which now belongs to Mr John M. Hutcheson. The bank was removed in 1811 to Bank House, which is situated on a line with Shaw Place, where it remained until it closed.

There were nine original partners, viz., Messrs Archibald Spiers of Elderslie, Boyd Alexander of Southbar, John Cunningham, merchant, Port-Glasgow (father of the late Lord Cunningham); Alexander Dunlop and John Hamilton, merchants, Greenock; James Patten, banker, there; William Napier of Blackstone, Charles Stirling of Kenmure, and Peters Spiers of Culcreuch. A branch was opened in Glasgow, and notice was given to the public that bills for discount were to be enclosed in letters addressed Renfrewshire Bank, Greenock, and given in to the Glasgow office on Saturday before three o'clock, and called for between one and three on Tuesday. Besides Glasgow, this bank had branches at Rothesay, Inveraray, and Campbeltown. In 1820 Mr Roger Aytoun, who had been in the army, was admitted a partner, and latterly became joint-cashier with Mr Patten. In 1833 most of the old partners were either dead or had retired, and in that year Mr Patten retired. In 1840 Mr Dunlop of Keppoch, the father of Alexander Murray Dunlop, for long the Member of Parliament for Greenock, also retired, leaving only two partners, Messrs Napier and Aytoun. The Renfrewshire Bank had at one time a pretty extensive business, but it gradually dwindled away, and on 1st April, 1842, the bank was sequestrated, and Mr

John Ker, merchant, Greenock, was elected trustee. The liabilities were less than £200,000, but the assets did not half meet the liabilities. Those creditors who held deposit accounts or notes dated prior to 1840, fell back upon old Mr Dunlop of Keppoch, and were paid in full, his estate being sold to meet those claims.

The Western Bank, with which the Greenock Bank amalgamated in 1843, stopped on 5th November, 1857, with liabilities to the amount of £9,000,000, which were fully paid by the shareholders. Its failure was mainly brought about by reckless management; allowing a few firms to absorb the whole lending capital, and when ruin came upon them from overtrading and speculation, the bank was involved in the disaster, to the loss and suffering of many helpless and innocent shareholders.

The City of Glasgow Bank, with liabilities to the extent of £12,000,000, has also within the last few weeks (viz., on 2nd October, 1878) succumbed from similar causes, and should prove a warning to other banks for generations to come. The directors of this bank are much to blame for believing the statements of gambling speculators, and trusting them with so much money, but we do not think they are sinners above all other bank directors merely



because their bank has failed, any more than those "eighteen upon whom the Tower of Siloam fell were sinners above all the men that dwelt at Jerusalem."





## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XXII.

The only other bank having its headquarters at Greenock excepting the Provident Bank, to which we will afterwards refer, was the Greenock Union Bank. This bank was established in 1840, and the shares were nearly all held in Greenock or Aberdeen. Its first office was the one at the West Breast, formerly occupied by the Greenock Bank. It was there, however, only for a short time, when having acquired the property in Hamilton Street now occupied by the Clydesdale Bank it was removed there. This site was bought from the Rev. Dr Begg of New Monkland, to whose wife, a Miss Mathie of Greenock, it belonged, she having succeeded to it, and a two-storey tenement in Manse Lane, which now also belongs to the Clydesdale Bank, through her father. The last-named house was the family residence, and it may not be uninteresting to note that while Mrs Begg was on a visit to her friends, her son James, the famous Dr

Begg of the Free Church, was born in this house in the Manse Lane, so that, by the accident of birth, the Doctor is a Greenockian. Mrs Begg's brothers were the owners of the smacks which traded regularly between Greenock and Liverpool before the introduction of steam ; and one of the brothers—Mr Hugh Mathie of Liverpool—was the founder of what afterwards came to be known as the Burns and MacIver Line. Mr Charles MacIver, afterwards the managing partner at Liverpool, was also born in the Manse Lane of Greenock, which, earlier in the century, was a much more respectable place than it is now. The Old Manse, after which the lane is called, and which was occupied by the ministers of the Mid Parish until about a third of this century had passed, now belongs to Messrs Thorne & Sons, wine merchants.

The directors of the Bank were as follows, viz. :—

Duncan Weir,	John Denniston.
Duncan A. Campbell.	Samuel Paterson.
Andrew Lindsay.	David Gilkison (Pt.-G.)
Adam Fullarton, manager.	
Alexander Rodger, cashier	
(late agent of the Clydesdale Bank, and father of the present agent, Mr John Rodger).	
William Tod, accountant.	

Among the principal Greenock shareholders, in addition to the directors and officials, were such well-known persons (now nearly all deceased) as

William Rodger, brewer; Alex. M'Callum, sugar refiner; Alex. Anderson, sugar refiner; Thomas Anderson, slater; Samuel M'Dougall, grocer; John Miller, merchant; Neill, Fleming, & Reid, manufacturers; Wm. Curtis, wine merchant; Alex. Brown, jun., blockmaker; Robert Fullarton, measurer; Colin M'Millan, tailor; John Clark, watchmaker; John M'Alister, baker; Duncan M'Gregor, optician; John Poynter, chemist; John Walker, draper; John Black, writer; Robt. Drummond, grocer; D. Shankland, merchant; Dr Thos. M'Call; Archd. Sword, merchant; D. M'Allister, painter; Robert Ewing, merchant; John Stewart, shoemaker; Andrew Lusk, grocer (now Sir Andrew Lusk); George Williamson, writer; Andrew Laing, bookseller; Duncan Nicol, merchant; William Mories, merchant; Peter Aitken, merchant; Duncan M'Dougall, grocer; Abram Lyle, cooper (father of Provost Lyle); Archibald Shannon, collector of harbour dues; John Brown, sailmaker; Wm. Allison, spirit merchant; John Gibb, grocer; John Ferguson, Bell Entry; John B. Cumming, Lloyd's surveyor; Dugald M'Farlane, hatter; Fisher & Hall, upholsterers; Alexander Cairns, pawnbroker; David Glassford, writer; Archibald M'Neill, grocer; Wm. Benson, rigger; R. W. Gillies, baker; Malcolm Buchanan, shoemaker; John Todd, cooper; James M'Cunn, grocer; David M'Ilwraith, hosier; Archibald Robinson, farrier; Renton M'Ara, tailor; Robert Langwill, tinsmith; Duncan M'Kellar, draper.

There were only five female shareholders, and they all belonged to Greenock, viz., two Misses Fullarton, daughters of the manager; Mrs Warden, Murdieston; Miss Jane Allan, and Miss Euphemia Easton, Rockville.

The bank did not continue long in existence, having been bought by the Clydesdale in 1843. Several of the banks offered for the business, but that company having offered the largest amount, were preferred, and their Greenock branch now occupy the same premises.

As 1843 was the year in which the Greenock Bank was bought by the Western, it is possible that the failure of the Renfrewshire Bank in 1842 may have induced the shareholders of both banks to dispose of their business. From the fact that there was considerable competition on the part of both Edinburgh and Glasgow banks to get the business, it seems to have been on the whole a profitable one, considering the limited field it occupied. Among other customers it had the Greenock Corporation, who in 1842 borrowed £2,000 from the Greenock Union Bank, the Greenock Bank, and the Glasgow Union Bank (Alexander Anderson agent)—being £6,000 in all—for harbour purposes, Provost Baine signing a bond for the amount.

The Greenock Union was the last of the local banks, with the exception already referred to; but the want of a local bank has not been felt, all the principal banks in Scotland having established agencies in the town.

The other local bank referred to is the

Provident, which, however, rests on an entirely different basis from those previously mentioned, in respect that it was not instituted for gain but for the philanthropic purpose of encouraging thrift and economy among the working classes. The main promoter of the Greenock Provident Bank was John Dunlop, brother of the late Member for Greenock. He was for a long time the secretary of the institution, and was besides one of the earliest and most influential temperance reformers in the West of Scotland. He has been named the Apostle of Temperance, and he well deserved it. His portrait adorns the large hall of the Greenock Temperance Institute. Mr Dunlop's attention was first drawn to the benefits of savings banks by the lectures and writings of Dr Duncan, of Ruthwell. This gentleman, who was minister of the parish church there until 1843, when he joined the Free Church, was the founder of savings banks. It was in his parish that the experiment was first tried, in 1810. Its operations having proved satisfactory, Dr Duncan urged their establishment throughout the country as a powerful instrument for promoting the personal and domestic happiness of the poorer classes, and a check to pauperism. Through his exertions their merits were speedily acknowledged on all sides, and Parliament passed an act for their

encouragement. Believing Greenock was a good field for such a bank, Mr Dunlop called a meeting by advertisement to consider the advisability of establishing one. This meeting was held in the old Town Hall on the 7th day of September, 1815—Sir Michael Shaw Stewart, grandfather of the present Baronet, occupying the chair. The following, among other resolutions, was adopted :—

That the meeting views with satisfaction the establishment of Provident and Savings Bank; that their satisfaction arises from the conviction that thus there is acquired into the bosom of society an additional and powerful means of securing an industrious population from thoughtless or dissolute expenditure a portion of the fruits of their industry, and of cherishing and preserving in their minds those virtuous and independent sentiments which have hitherto so honourably distinguished the Scottish character.

Having agreed for these reasons to establish a savings bank, the gentlemen present signed a guarantee binding themselves for certain amounts subscribed by them for its faithful management. The subscriptions amounted to £416 10s in all, in sums of £10 and £5, the only person subscribing more being Sir Michael, who subscribed £21. The full list of subscribers will appear in the appendix. The following from among the guarantors were appointed as the office-

bearers and committee of management for the first year :—

Sir Michael Shaw Stewart, president.  
Alexander Dunlop, chairman.

*Committee.*

Duncan Smith.	William Macfie.
William Scott.	Robert Campbell.
James Likly.	George Dempster.
Nicol M'Nicol.	Alan Ker.
James Steele.	Robert Turner.
John Scott, junr.	James Ramsay.
Claud Marshall.	John Haddow.

John Dunlop, secretary.  
Colin Lamont, cashier.

In anticipation of the scheme being carried out, Mr John Dunlop had addressed a letter to the Magistrates and Town Council in reference to the subject, asking their co-operation. This letter with the deliverance thereon was duly minuted, and a copy of the minute given to Mr Dunlop to be read at the public meeting, which was accordingly done. The minute is as follows :—

At Greenock and within the Council Chambers there, the 31st day of August 1815. The Magistrates and Town Council of Greenock, and as such, trustees of the harbours, being duly convened and met.

The clerk laid before the meeting the following statement. handed to him by Mr John Dunlop for the purpose of being submitted to the meeting :—

Mr John Dunlop states to the meeting that it is in view to establish in the town a Provident Bank



for the deposition of small sums by the labouring classes. That the Royal Bank and Bank of Scotland have respectively transmitted orders to their agents throughout the kingdom to receive the accumulated amount of such deposits, and allow interest on the same at the rate of 5 per cent. That the agent for the Bank of Scotland in this place has received such an order. But that it has been thought by several gentlemen who have turned their attention to the subject that instead of availing itself of the accommodation given by the Bank of Scotland, it would be expedient on various accounts for the Provident Bank of Greenock to place accumulated deposits in the hands of the Trustees for the harbours to receive interest at 5 per cent. In this way it is believed that in a few years a capital of from £10,000 to £20,000 belonging to inhabitants of the town will always make part of the harbour fund, which will be a relief to the Trustees in the loan transactions necessary to keep the funds full, and the jobbers, carmen, labourers, and all others connected with the quays and breasts will, by deposition of money in the Provident Bank, become interested in the fabric of the harbours and in their prosperity and advantage. on these and other accounts those gentlemen who are interested in the establishment of the Provident Bank have requested Mr Dunlop to wait on the Trustees for the harbour and request to know if it will be agreeable to them to receive deposits from the Provident Bank and allow five per cent. interest. It is not proposed that the bank should be open more than twice a week, perhaps only once, and the cashier may every day that the bank is open pay the amount to the cash account of the harbour fund in the Renfrewshire Bank and hold the receipt as a voucher and settle with the harbour treasurer once a quarter, or oftener if necessary. It is be-

lieved there will seldom be occasion to draw from the treasurer, because those depositors who wish to draw from the Provident Bank will generally be paid from the money in the act of depositation.

The above statement having been duly considered by the meeting, they acquainted Mr Dunlop, who was in attendance and called in, that they highly approved of the intended establishment and proposal of depositing with them the money that may be lodged, and that as soon as the Bank is established the trustees will be ready to enter into the necessary arrangements with the managers of it for carrying the intended proposal into effect. Extracted from the records of the trustees.

(Sgd.) JOHN MUIR, T.C. Depute.

After making this arrangement the bank was fairly launched, and in the first year the amount deposited was £2,534 15s 9d; the amount drawn including interest was £803 14s; and the amount left in the hands of the Harbour Trustees was £1,706 1s 9d. The number of accounts opened during the first year was 384, and the number remaining open at the end of the year was 296. The Provident Bank has since gradually gone on increasing until now at the balance in 1878 the amount deposited is no less than £230,765, the number of accounts being no fewer than 13,848. Of this sum about £75,000 has been lent to the various Town Trusts, the Harbours having £50,000. The remainder is invested in Government 3 per cent. consols, Glasgow Water Trust bonds, and railway mortgage bonds.

At the institution of the Bank the committee was formed from the parties guaranteeing, but as in a few years the guarantee ceased, a resolution was passed giving the committee for the time being power to elect their successors, and it has gone on in that way ever since. For its success, the bank has been greatly indebted to the men who have filled the position of cashier, first to Mr Colin Lamont, who filled the office for about 50 years, and then to Mr John Adams and Colin D. Lamont, the present holders of the office. Mr Adams has been connected with the bank for upwards of 30 years, and Mr Colin Lamont has been so since the death of his father about ten years ago. In October, 1834, the committee showed their appreciation of the services of Mr Lamont, sen., by presenting him with a silver tea-set, value thirty guineas. Mr Thomas Fairrie, in making the presentation, said that to Mr Lamont in a great measure must be attributed the unequalled success of the bank. The perfect accuracy with which the business had been carried on, and the total absence of disputes during the nineteen years of the bank's existence and through the whole of its operations, he thought entitled Mr Lamont to this special mark of the estimation in which his conduct was held by the directors of the establishment. All who knew the

services of Mr Lamont will agree with what was said of him by Mr Fairrie ; and those who know aught of the labour now connected with the management of a large institution, having such a number of customers, will be satisfied that his place is most efficiently filled by his successors.

After Mr John Dunlop's death the office of secretary was filled for a number of years by Mr William Liddell, writer, and after him by the present secretary, Mr Thomas King, writer, and to them also the bank has been greatly indebted.

One of the original rules in regard to the election of Members of the Committee of Management was, "That no trustee of the Greenock harbours, or such other person or persons as may hereafter, or are now, debtors of the Provident Bank, shall be competent as members of committee, or to hold any office in the management of the Institution." This rule still exists, although somewhat modified in the wording, but seems to have been overlooked of late, as one of the Greenock Harbour Trustees filled the office of Chairman during the past year. On the whole, however, it is a wholesome rule, and one that should not be lightly violated.

The promoters of this bank, like those of other institutions having the welfare of the community at heart, found the public house

a grievous drawback to those whom they wished to benefit, and at the general meeting in October, 1836, they called attention to the subject in their report in the following manner :—

There is a practice in respect to the mode of paying workmen's wages here which the committee have been long satisfied interposes an obstacle of most serious magnitude between these classes and the benefits of the institution, which it is highly to be wished they should enjoy. The practice to which we allude is that followed by some masters of paying the wages of several of their men together for want of small change to pay each man separately, the consequence being that the men are tempted to resort to drinking-houses where change is had at the cost of part of the money which would otherwise find its way to the Savings Bank or the use of their families, besides the risk of habits of drinking being formed, if not already engendered. The committee have deemed it their duty to send a circular letter to all masters having men's wages to pay praying them in future to furnish themselves with change without subjecting the men to the almost necessary and obvious risk of going to the public house for same.

The letter was well received by the masters, and the committee reported at a subsequent meeting that a change had taken place for the better. With all respectable employers that is undoubtedly the case, but the Police Courts to this day occasionally show that there are sub-contractors connected with large establishments who

still resort to the public-houses to pay their men, a practice which is most pernicious, and cannot be too strongly reprobated. The first office of the bank was the Old Sheriff Court Hall in Bank Street, the use of which was kindly given by Sheriff Marshall. It was afterwards removed to the Old Town Hall in Hamilton Street, then the hall above the Old Post Office in Church Place, and latterly to its own premises in William Street, where it continues to flourish more vigorously than ever.

The office-bearers and members of the present Committee of Management are as follows :—

James Stewart, M.P., president.

Robert Caird, shipbuilder, chairman.

*Committee.*

John R. Allison.	Alexander Ferguson.
William Letham.	Hugh William Walker.
Robert H. Houston.	Robert Muir.
Robert Kerr.	John Stewart.
Henry T. Patten.	James Reid, jun.
James Morton, jun.	James Paterson.
Robert Grieve.	John S. Nicol.

Thomas King, secretary.

John Adams and	} Joint cashiers.
C. D. Lamont,	

James Kelso, auditor.



## OUR HARBOURS.

### ARTICLE XXIII.

When referring to the Greenock Bank in a previous number it was stated that it had been robbed and that some account would afterwards be given of the robbery, provided Mr John Adam, our late respected Town Chamberlain, who had written a detailed narrative of the circumstances, would give his consent to the use of same. This he has kindly done, and the following particulars are taken partly from his contribution to the *West of Scotland Magazine*, entitled "The Man with the Squint," and partly from the report of the trial of one of the robbers given in the newspapers of the time.

It seems that in 1827 a gang of London cracksmen, who had been successful in various robberies in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, resolved to give the provinces the benefit of their services. Having selected Greenock as a suitable locality for their next efforts, one of the gang—there were four in all—payed it a visit to spy the land. In June of that year he

took lodgings with a Mrs Wilson, who then lived in the middle flat of the house in Brougham Street immediately to the west of the Roman Catholic Church. From here he sallied out to make his observations and fix on the particular premises to be operated on. After staying for a few weeks he left town, and returned again in the following November, this time accompanied by a companion, who, in addition to other marked lineaments of countenance which gave him a sinister look, had a *squint*. They both put up at Mrs Wilson's house.

The Greenock Bank, which they had chosen for their nefarious operations, was then in the west corner of the Assembly Room buildings (now called the Exchange Buildings) in Cathcart Street, presently occupied by Mr Craig, hatter. The entrance to it was from a lobby about the centre of the building, and in the same lobby there was in those days a newsroom which went by the name of the St James' Club. The bank door was on the right side of the lobby, and the newsroom door was further in on the left-hand side.

Having arrived in Greenock on the evening of 23rd November, and rested for the night, the two friends went along the town for a stroll on the following morning.



"Do you observe there the hotel on the left (the Tontine)," said the one to the other.

"Yes," was the curt rejoinder.

"Then look a little further on the opposite side of the street to that large building. You observe it. There that's the place. These are the windows of the concern."

Ah! I perceive.

The door is in the centre. It is a common entrance to rooms above and to a reading-room on the ground floor. The door on the left in going in leads to the public room. *Our* door is on the right; you can glance in at it as you pass. No one will notice that you are looking there he added with a knowing wink at his companion's optics. And the two men walked leisurely on."

"Have you been inside inquired the new comer?"

"I have been once only in both rooms—the outer and the inner one. I know them well. So far all right, but will such a number of people going out and in not be an obstacle."

"No, that is an advantage. Suspicion will be lulled for that reason alone. Besides, the regularity with which everything is carried on there is extraordinary. The business seems to be worked like the piston in a steam engine—never varying in any degree. What was done yesterday is done to-day and will be done to-morrow. Change is unknown. The governor has an eye like a hawk, and is evidently the most punctual man in the world. If he coughed this forenoon at 11 o'clock depend on't he would cough again to-morrow at the same hour, and not at half-past. I could tell the hour by seeing him pass along the street, and the particular minute of the hour by the part of the street he is on."

The governor referred to was the manager

of the bank, Mr Alexander Thomson. His punctuality and regularity in passing to and from his office were so exact that it became proverbial that shopkeepers could set their watches with as great certainty of correctness by seeing him pass as by the public clock.

While the two worthies were thus reconnoitering the bank, the porter, Robert Love, came out.

"Who is that man just coming out?" said he with the squint to his neighbour.

"By jove, that is the porter. We must give him a wide berth. Come, let us keep clear of him. Does he observe us do you think?"

"No, he does'nt; he is looking the other way. He is a man of some bone that, and would be an awkward customer in a tussle. I say, comrade, that fellow would hold on like a bull dog if ever he got a hold. He is a lout, but as strong as Samson.

"Don't mind him; we will go down this lane:" and they wheeled about abruptly into one of the side streets which intersect the principal thoroughfare.

The robbers, for it was they who had taken up their lodgings with Mrs Wilson, called themselves respectively Eldin and Gray, the latter being the man with the squint. They were very regular in their habits—extremely regular indeed—and what was of more consequence to their landlady, they were excellent payers. She could not but be struck, however, with a singular habit which they soon exhibited of rising every morning before day-

light to go to the shore to bathe in salt water. They went into the sea, so they said, in the dark between six and seven o'clock on a winter morning in every kind of weather. Rain, or sleet, or snow, or hard frost, or high wind did not deter those two healthy gentlemen from taking their accustomed dip, and that too before daylight. Very odd, they were strong-looking men and not weakly bodies who needed to be braced up with the salt water. Maybe she reasoned they were like the worthy Maister Moscript, the Auld Licht, who, honest man, was said to bathe every morning, summer and winter; or perhaps they were afflicted with some cuticular disease; and indeed she once or twice thought it might be the gout that troubled them, for she had heard that sea-bathing was a sovereign remedy for sufferers from this complaint.

We have said they were exceedingly regular in their habits, and so they were, and temperate too. They went to bed every night at ten o'clock, or if they remained up later than that they never called for anything so as to give trouble after that respectable hour. They were well-behaved and well-conditioned men, but most assuredly they were the least communicative persons that ever were born.

A neighbour of the name of Mrs Cosser having called in on Mrs Wilson one

evening, the merits and demerits of the lodgers became the topic of conversation. The visitor thought that men that had so little to say for themselves could not be after much good, and the landlady, honest woman, was defending them as best she could. Neighbour like, she asked Mrs Cosser to wait for supper, which she set about getting ready. Having to go into a large pantry where she kept the dishes, which jutted back into the adjoining room occupied by her lodgers, she heard a peculiar sound coming from their room; listening for a minute to learn whether she was right in her conjecture, she came out and saluted Mrs Cosser with—

“I have made a discovery at last. These gentlemen must be ironmongers. Come in and listen. I hear them working at something like metal.”

That curiosity which is a never-failing ingredient in the composition of a lady, and which is a commendable virtue enough in its place, was excited in a moment, for, starting up from the chair, and applying her ear to the spot pointed out by her friend, she said softly—

“So do I. I hear them distinctly. That’s just it; they are in the hardware line,” repeated the landlady.

“No doubt of it,” answered the visitor, “and I shouldn’t wonder, good souls as they are, if it is not to avoid disturbing us that they are carrying on their work with so little noise; one can hardly hear them.”

"Filing iron they are" said Mrs Cosser, still applying her ear to the wall. "Yes, my lodgers are hardware merchants. I'm glad they are." For to tell the truth the decent woman had not a few misgivings as to how they employed themselves, and what could be the object of their living in Greenock in such a secluded manner.

Both ladies seem to have satisfied themselves that they had hit on the true calling of the mysterious lodgers, and sat down to gossip over their tea, and no doubt debate whether it was in the Britannia metal or Sheffield cutlery line they were engaged.

Had they been able to see into the room they would have wondered still more ; for there on the table before the two men were various implements, for which it would be difficult to find a name. There were files, vices, blocks of keys, and keys almost finished. They were of all sizes, and some of them with wards, and some of them mere skeletons. Some of the block keys were coated with wax, which was marked as if it had been pressed against some hard substance, and the robbers were busy cutting out the wards to make them fit the locks, of which the impression in wax had been taken.

They stayed in Mrs Wilson's lodgings on this occasion for two weeks and three days and then left Eldin saying he was going to Paris and the man with the squint that he was going to Newcastle. Returning

shortly afterwards they remained with her until the 7th of January when they removed to the George Inn (now the Royal Hotel) at the Breast. While living in that pleasant hostelry they continued their salutary custom of early rising even in January. Between five and six was their time of getting up. But they are peripatetic, for they come and go, they leave the hotel for a week and then they come back and stay for a week, they leave it for a day and then they come back for a day, and they give the polite and obliging waiter handsome gratuities for his attention at all times.

They left the George Inn about the end of January, 1828, and returned again on the 2nd of March and remained there until the night before the robbery. In the interval they seem to have been partly out of the town with accomplices who were perhaps greater experts in fitting keys than themselves, and part of the time they lodged in the house of John Herriot, auctioneer, a well-known Greenock character. They also stayed some time in the Blue Bell Tavern kept by Mrs Dougal, wife of Neil Dougal, musician and vintner in Greenock. This tavern was situated up one stair in a tenement which stood at the corner of Cross-shore Street, where the Commercial Bank is now. It had a corner window which commanded a view

of the entrance to the bank, and here the robbers passed hours together, watching every movement that went on.

"Ah, that bank they had a greedy desire to know all about it; they knew by headmark every one that entered it, and they counted them as they saw them enter; and they knew every one who came out, and they counted them also; and, very odd, of the comers and goers the remainder resolved itself into one. A unit was always left. This root of numbers was ever a residuary. Robert Love, the porter at the bank, was the remainder man. Whoever might come and go this unit was always there from ten at night till ten in the morning. The multitudes who were frequenters of this building were dovetailed into the masses of the town during the quiet and security-loving hours of the night. The temple of Midas was then closed to all but the janitor. He was the presiding deity—the sole high priest of this altar of mammon—and the man with the squint took a note thereof. He did not indeed write his note in Latin or in Greek, nor in Scotch, nor in English; neither did he write it in shorthand or in longhand, nor in any hand at all, but simply inscribed it on the tablets of his memory, and he had a retentive memory, and his eyes, although set after a fashion which made their furtive glances anything but agreeable to look at, were good eyes notwithstanding. They served him well on many occasions. He could keep them steadily fixed on the bank door, for instance, and if he were observed to be looking intently, ten chances to one he would be supposed to be viewing the Grecian portico of the Tontine Hotel on the other side of the street. His obliquity of vision was of essential value to him. It prevented him from ordinary espionage.

None but one that squints can know exactly what a man with a squint is looking at. Awry eyes are therefore not without their advantage.

Of one thing the robbers took particular note, and that was the movements of the bank porter. During the night his bed lay against the door of the iron safe, of which the manager kept the key, and there was no chance of making an entrance then unless they made up their minds to commit murder as well as robbery. This they were disposed to avoid, if possible, and they made special note of what he did in the morning between the time of getting up and the opening of the bank. It seems that Love, besides being bank porter, had been for some time the contractor for carrying the mail post between Greenock and Largs. The gig and the horse used for the purpose were put up at the stables of the Wheat Sheaf Inn in Church Place, and from thence they started every morning (Sabbath not excepted) at half-past eight. Love employed a lad to act as driver, but he made it a point to go over every morning to see the horse yoked and the mail gig despatched. This regular visit of his, which seldom exceeded half-an-hour, did not escape the observant eyes that watched him, and during that half-hour or little more it was that they got access to the bank and took the impression of the various locks from



which they made the necessary keys to accomplish their ends.

In March everything was ready, and the robbers agreed to make the attempt on Sabbath the 9th of that month, as on that morning Love, not having to open at ten, generally waited out a little longer, and because on that day there were fewer pedestrians passing to and fro on the street.





## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XXIV.

The night preceding the morning on which the robbery was committed was that of Saturday, and as usual the streets were busy with people making their marketing. Neither shops nor streets were so well lighted in the evening as they are now, gas not having superseded the oil lamps or the candles then in use, although in that very year (1828) a company was formed in town for its manufacture. The night was drizzly, and the footpaths were miry. The wind swept fitfully along in stormy gusts, and some of the venerable oil lamps were blown out, and the thoroughfare wore a sombre and rather dismal appearance. As it got later, the drizzle increased, and the crowd thinned away, until the streets were nearly cleared. Two men, however, might be seen walking along the street in earnest conversation. They were unlike tradesmen, and did not seem to be out for the purpose of laying in provisions for their families. They walked closely together,

and conversed in whispers, so that the sound of their voices could scarcely be heard.

"It must be done to-morrow, Gray," said the one to the other.

"Good; I am ready; all that has been chalked out to me to do is done," answered his companion.

"Further postponement," continued the first speaker, "is not only bad policy, but it increases the danger. We are already known here by too many. If we should happen to meet that long-tongued, babbling idiot, our old landlady, the affair might be blown. The others have come within the last half hour. They will be in their places. Every arrangement is completed. I have gone over everything to you a hundred times. I shall go into the bank; you will go into the news-room and hold the keeper in talk for a few minutes. There must be no shrinking now. If you had not been so pigeon-livered we should have been safe in London with the swag a fortnight ago."

"Bah!" said the other, "I have a horrid dislike to be caught like a rat in a trap. While I am gammoning the keeper, if the game be sprung, I shall be nabbed without a chance of escape."

"Fool! I suppose the chances are much the same for all of us. Isn't my windpipe as good as yours?" and he put up his hand significantly to his throat.

"Ah! well, then, let us stick firmly together. All's right."

"We shall muster early. I'll be on the spot at six or sooner."

The two friends in villainy who were thus conversing were Eldin and Gray, whose acquaintance we have already made. Their two confederates had come in separate gigs,

the one of whom put up his horse and gig at Ross's stables in Shaw Street, and the other put up his at a stable farther east. After the above conversation they parted for the night to meet the following morning as arranged.

That night Love, the bank porter, as he states in his evidence, locked up the premises at the usual hour, carefully fastening the doors and windows from the inside with the usual bolts and bars, and then retired to rest, his bed so placed that his head was close to the massive door of the safe. The next morning he rose at the usual hour, and after dressing himself and putting his bed in the allotted corner of the bank, he went out to see the mail despatched. Locking the bank door, he called at his own house, which was round the corner, and after saying good morning to his wife, and hanging the bank key on its appropriate nail, he hied to the Wheat Sheaf. He met two or three people on the way, but spoke to nobody, and there was nothing in the appearance of any of these individuals which in anyway called for special attention. He took out his horse and put him into the gig; put the mail bags carefully under the seat, and saw the driver start fairly off to Largs. Being the Sabbath, he chatted with the stableman and host of the inn longer than usual, and, perhaps for himself, it was

fortunate he did so, as had he returned and gone into the bank it is more than likely the desperado who was then rifling the treasure chest would have added murder to robbery.

Now, God help you, Robert Love, if by some mysterious chance you have forgotten or omitted to do any one thing which should cause you to go back to the bank. For any sake, abide the customary period; employ your minutes, whatever number they may be—nay, waste them, and as many more than you usually do as you will, but take heed that their number be no fewer than they were last Sabbath, and go not back thither until their whole sands have run down, or your life is not worth a pin's purchase. The sword of Damocles hangs by a silken hair above your devoted head, and you do not know of your peril. A Cerberus is at your heels, your steps are dogged, you are watched; this morning there is a fiendish eye upon you, and if you dare to set your foot upon the threshold of the bank sooner than is your wont, as sure as there is a heaven above you, a pistol bullet will be lodged in your brain, or more likely a sharp knife will be planted noiselessly in your heart.

While Robert Love was attending to his mail gig the robbers were not idle. There were four of them, and each had his allotted post. One watched Love, and having followed him to the corner of Church Place, where the Wheat Sheaf is situated, and seen him engaged at his morning's duty, he returned and took up his station at Buchanan's Close (then called Scott's Close, the wide close to the east of Longwell Close), where he could

view the entrance of the bank and at the same time keep his eye on the corner of Church Place in case the bank porter should return. Another went eastwards to Ross's and took out a gig with yellow shafts which he had left there the night before, and as soon as it was ready he drove leisurely along Rue-end Street, now and again looking back as if expecting some one to join him. The late Treasurer Archibald Sword happened to be out that morning, and noticed the kenspeckle gig. He also saw its occupant looking wistfully back several times, and wondered in his own mind for whom he could be waiting on the Sabbath morning. On turning the corner of the Rue-end into Cathcart Street, Mr Sword met a man dressed in a cloak and carrying two large bags, who seems from the description to have been no less a personage than Eldin carrying the plunder. While the two referred to were performing the least hazardous part of the enterprise, Eldin and Gray had passed into the lobby of the bank. Finding that the news-room was open, the latter entered as arranged the previous evening to engage the keeper in conversation while the former, opening the outer door with a key which fitted exactly, stole into the bank. Once inside he pulls other keys from his pocket, and applying one to the safe it opens ; applying another to the

money chest it also opens; and the treasures of the bank are in his power. He has two capacious travelling bags with him, which he speedily fills with the bundles of notes, and the packets of gold.

Fill! fill! fill! nothing will content him but the whole. No, he must have his carpet bags choke full. He grips another bundle—in it goes; another, another, another! Wicked man that you are, will no less serve than all the valuable contents of the coffers? Have you no compassion on the poor bankers, nor on the population of the town? On Monday morning there will not be a pound note left; the inhabitants will require to go back to their primitive condition and trade by barter. What does he care? But a single parcel more will not squeeze in, and he therefore locks the chest, leaving a skeleton key inside by way of remembrancer, just to show that he had been there, and as Sophia Weston did when she left her muff for Tom Jones to look at. Having emptied the chest of its contents, he slipped a small ring into the lock, so that additional time might be gained while they were picking the lock on Monday morning to enable them to get further away. He then locks the safe door and opens the bank door, and seeing all clear he issues from the bank. Throwing a cloak over his shoulders to cover all, and with a bag in each hand and a parcel under his arm, he once more gains the open street and makes for the Rue-end, where the gig and his companion are waiting.

Leaving him on his way to the gig with his booty, let us return to the doings of his comrade, the "Man with the Squint," for

it was he who had gone into the newsroom to occupy the attention of the keeper while Eldin was in the bank. On going in, he asked to see some files of newspapers for the purpose of ascertaining whether it were true, as he had been informed, that a relative in whom he was deeply interested had been recently drowned off the island of Barbadoes. The keeper of the room was kindly disposed, and sympathised much with the gentleman, who, he saw, was deeply agitated regarding the fate of his relative, as he was very nervous, and every now and again used his handkerchief to wipe off the perspiration which poured over his forehead.

"The death must have occurred within the last two months, you say," said the keeper. "Yes, about that time, in consequence of the swamping of a boat in which he and others were making an excursion. A squall caught them, and they were overset. My friend only is said to have been lost."

"Very sad, indeed; but do not take it so sore. Be more composed. Here is a *Jamaica Courant*. You run it over, and I'll try the *Morning Post*, as accidents are generally recorded there."

At this time another gentleman, Mr Simon P. Jamieson, son-in-law to the Rev. Mr Steele, the minister of the West Parish—old Bishop Steele as he was called—came into the room. Saluting the keeper with "Good morning," he asked to see the *Shipping Gazette*,



which he scanned carefully. During the time he was in the room the artful rascal, who was looking for the obituary of his deceased friend, was quite in the fidgets, and whenever he left he followed quickly as if he had something to say to him. He returned immediately, however, as if he had changed his mind and given up the idea of speaking to him, and muttered something about its being of "no importance—he would see him again." He really seems to have been afraid if Mr Jamieson stood long in the lobby he might meet Eldin making his exit from the bank, and so the game be sprung, and for his own safety he wished to make sure that he was fairly off the premises. Having seen him clear out he returned to the search in the newspapers. But the looked-for intelligence could not be found. A short time longer was thus occupied, when hearing a faint sound as of the footsteps of some one going out of the lobby he thanked the keeper for his attention and courtesy, and apologising for the fruitless trouble he had given him he departed.

Eldin with his heavy burden soon reached the Rue-end, where the yellow gig was waiting, into which he placed the bags which had attracted Mr Sword's attention, and leaping up beside the driver, the robbers gallop off with the spoil. Sharp as they were, however, in

stowing the plunder into the box of the yellow gig, the other gig came up and passed them. It was of a dark colour, and in it were the other two of the gang, namely, "The Man with the Squint" and the man who had been set to watch the movements of Love, the bank porter. It also seems to have been waiting in readiness until the deed was done, when these two, having coalesced, drove ahead of their comrades in the yellow gig.

And now they are off. A rare morning's work was that, but they must not tarry. A discovery may be made and they may be pursued. On, then, on, through Port-Glasgow, through Bishopton, where they take a little refreshment—and they must needs require it after their anxiety and exertion—and on again furiously, like sons of Nimshi, on to Glasgow.

In galloping into Glasgow, the yellow gig nearly ran over a young woman, a domestic servant belonging to Greenock called Mary Nairn. The church bells were just done ringing, and she was hurrying to church when she met the gig. On the publication of the hue and cry, she recognised, from the description and the time at which they entered Glasgow, that it was the robbers' gig that had nearly run her down. Miss Nairn is still alive, although now over fourscore, and recollects most vividly the appearance of the robbers.

Arriving at Glasgow they quitted the gigs

and engaged post-chaises from a carriage-hirer in the Gallowgate. Here they separated for a time, two of them taking the road to Carlisle on the way to London, and the other two to Edinburgh. The two who went to the latter city were our old friends Eldin and Gray, and their purpose in going there was to try and get some of the notes changed before suspicion was aroused. It was to cause delay and so gain time on the Monday to accomplish this after the banks opened that the little ring had been put by the robber into the lock of the safe. The first thing on Monday then was to change the notes, and Eldin agreed to do it.

"I will do it myself," said Eldin. "I shall go into the bank and try my luck as it will never do to carry so many of these notes to London, it would be so difficult to change them there;" and with an effrontery which was characteristic of his conduct in the entire affair, he marched into a bank, and, representing himself as an English merchant who had collected a considerable quantity of Scotch notes in the way of his business, he expressed a wish to be served with gold or Bank of England notes, as he was on his way South. The bait was swallowed. The usually wary Scotchman was caught with the wily tale, and he rid himself in that bank of about a thousand pounds.

Being so fortunate in his first attempt, he tried other three banks and succeeded in two of them, the amount changed in the three

banks, viz., Sir William Forbes's, the Royal, and the British Linen, being about £4,800 in all. He then tried the Bank of Scotland, but was unsuccessful here, the teller saying plump that he did not believe his story, and that there must be some other reason for his having so many Greenock bank notes. On joining his companion and telling him of his rebuff, they agreed that it would be prudent to make off with what they had secured, rather than run further risk by staying in Edinburgh.

"You go," said Eldin, "and hire a chaise and fetch the luggage, and you can pick me up on the road. I'll walk a mile out of the town; that will be better than the two of us going together; and even if that suspicious bank teller should have put the detectives on the scent, you are not known in the business."

Having procured the chaise they travelled to London, *via* Preston, Liverpool, Lichfield, and Birmingham, at which places they were afterwards proved to have put up and changed horses. Travelling fast they reached London within a few days, where they met their companions who had arrived before them and divided the plunder.

The greater part of the notes were afterwards recovered, and as the recovery was nearly as remarkable as the theft we will narrate how it was done in our next number.



## OUR HARBOURS.

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### ARTICLE XXV.

The morning of Monday the 10th March dawned on the town, and Robert Love, who slept in the bank on Sabbath night, rose as usual—as he states in his evidence—between 6 and 7 o'clock, to make ready for the hour at which the important money transactions of the greatest Banking Company of the town were to commence. He opened the shutters and swept out the office, but saw nothing out of place that could lead him to imagine anyone except himself had visited the premises on the previous day. Mr Brymner, the cashier (father of Bailie Brymner), came into the bank a few minutes before ten, and at ten o'clock precisely the manager, Mr Thomson, came in and handed Love the keys for the purpose of opening the safe. There was so much difficulty in this, however, that a smith had to be sent for, and when after considerable delay it was opened, they found the money chest had been rifled and its contents carried off.

It is one second to ten by the town clock ; the cashier walks in, but he must pause till the manager arrives, because he keeps the master-key. At the first stroke of the hour there he is, pulling off his black kid gloves as he enters. He is fresh and hearty, having had a lively walk in from his country house. Not a moment is lost ; he has no greatcoat to take off, for he never wears a greatcoat ; his beaver is hung up on its accustomed peg, the key of the safe is handed to the porter, and the ponderous morocco-bound ledgers and cash-books and journals are transferred to their desks for accountant, clerk, and cashier to deal with. But the teller is impatient to begin operation. He has his books ; where is his cash ? Something has gone wrong with the lock of the strong box or the key has been twisted, they cannot tell which, but it will not go in. Perhaps some dust has lodged in it. Pick it out, man. Here's a quill. There, blow in it, blow the dust out till the key whistle. Try it now. No it won't go in. Confound it, what can be the matter ? This will never do ; send for a locksmith.

A locksmith is in the neighbourhood, and he is there in a trice. The sooty-faced man of skill tries what he can effect ; still the key won't go into the lock. There must be something in it, bring a candle. Ah, he has found something. What on earth can this be, as with pointed pincers he brings out a little ring ? Every one stares. It is wonderful, very wonderful, strange ! How could it have got there ? Very odd, indeed ; but no matter, open the box. The ponderous lid is slowly lifted—it is open. The manager and those around him stand aghast—the chest is empty.

At the time the safe was being opened the thieves were visiting the banks in Edin-

burgh trying to convert the notes into gold, and the reason for inserting the ring is now made abundantly plain. It was of a piece with the cunningly devised scheme for accomplishing the robbery, and shows that the men engaged in this audacious transaction had more than ordinary abilities.

While business was thus delayed a number of people had come into the bank for money, and Mr Brymner was keeping them in chat until it could be got, and he was thunderstruck when Mr Thomson came into the front office, and said, "Sir, you are wanted; you could not have locked the money box on Saturday." He went into the room and saw that the chest had been despoiled of its contents. He replied that he had a most distinct recollection of locking the chest on Saturday, and that there was then in it £34,116 8s 6d, about £28,354 of which was in notes of the Greenock Bank, £600 in large notes of the Renfrewshire Bank, and £357 in guineas and pound notes. There were besides £3,143 13s of mixed notes, also gold and silver money, the former consisting of guineas and half-guineas, seven-and-sixpence pieces, and sovereigns, and the latter of silver money of various denominations, the coin amounting to £1,661 15s 6d. It had all been stolen. On recovering from his surprise, and looking

carefully into the box, he found part of a skeleton key, which led him to believe that the box had been robbed by thieves, and intimation was at once sent to Mr Williamson, the Fiscal. Having intimated to the customers waiting to be served that they could not be supplied that day in consequence of the robbery, they departed, and immediately the whole town rang with the news that the Bank had been plundered. As was to be expected, the amount stolen was greatly exaggerated—some put it at fifty thousand pounds, others at a hundred thousand, others again at five hundred thousand, and some even went the length of a million sterling. At first it was rumoured that the bank would break, but the bank did not break; and as showing the confidence placed in the directorate and management, it may be stated that notwithstanding the severe blow no run of any moment took place, the public apparently being satisfied as to the ability of the bankers in the long run to meet all their engagements.

If a person unacquainted with Greenock had happened to visit it on Monday, the 10th day of March, 1828, he would be ready to fancy that he had fallen in with a peculiar population. The town was like a town bewitched; the people were like a people possessed. Every man forsook his own proper business and joined himself to his



neighbour, and streets, lanes, and closes were filled with crowds of people with amazement-stricken visages which to a stranger would have been truly unaccountable. Conversation was carried on chiefly in low, hurried interrogatives, and the whole and the one absorbing topic was the plundering of the bank. Whoever had a word to say more than was already retailed was regarded as an oracle. How could this be done? was the universal query. It seemed an impossibility, and yet the deed was done. All the money in the bank was spirited away. There must be a second Mephistopheles or a Diable Boiteux let loose on the earth. Yet some there were who curled their lip and gave a significant sneer, winking hard the while and looking vastly wise, but saying nothing. They held their own opinion, and the guardian of a rival banking establishment flourished his stick twice and said he would not have been so easily taken in; the villains knew better than try the door of the office which he had charge of—that they did.

A meeting of the directors resident in the town at once took place, and intelligence of the movements of strange looking individuals in the vicinity of the bank on the Sabbath morning and of the mad pace at which the two gigs were seen flying through Cartdyke towards Glasgow being communicated, their suspicions were at once turned in that direction. Mr Sword told of his *rencontre* with the stranger making for the gig carrying two portmanteaus, and Mr John Jessimaine, clerk with Messrs Campbell, Anderson & Co., had seen two men dressed

in olive greatcoats, one of whom squinted, in close proximity to the bank. Jas. Stewart, labourer, Greenock, also saw two men with olive-coloured greatcoats standing in Cathcart Street close to the bank very early in the morning. Other information satisfied the directors that the thieves were fairly off with the plunder towards London, and the question was as to who should follow them, and how the stolen notes could be recovered. After consideration it was agreed that Mr Charles C. Scott, shipbuilder, Greenock, and Mr William Smith, merchant, Liverpool, partners of the bank, should be the parties selected to proceed to London to try and find out the robbers and recover the notes.

These gentlemen accordingly proceeded to London, and having consulted with some friends there, they were recommended to open negotiations with the thieves themselves through a legal gentleman who was universally recognised as a thieves' attorney. They therefore proceeded to his office, and after some hesitation he agreed to make inquiry for them regarding the matter, and said that if they would call again in about a week he would tell them anything which should transpire. They called, as arranged, the following week, and were again put off, under the pretext that he had not yet got power to make an arrangement, although he

was satisfied he would by-and-by be able to meet their wishes. Annoyed at the procrastination, Messrs Smith, Scott, and Parkes (the latter a London friend who accompanied them) stated that while willing to make any reasonable compromise, they were not to be humbugged by longer delay, and unless negotiations were brought to an issue at once "they would take such other measures as would bring about the end for which they had come to London." The warning contained in this sentence was not lost on the attorney, who was merely procrastinating that he might make good terms for himself with both parties. He, therefore, said that he would bring the matter to an issue without delay, and that if they called in another week he was sure he would be able to communicate something satisfactory.

As soon as his visitors had withdrawn the attorney unlocked the door of an inner chamber of his office and walked in. There was a man seated inside. "I tell you," said Mr Attorney, as he strode across the room, "I tell you that you must decide promptly, or you will be done for. These are Scotchmen who are on your track. They are not to be trusted. I know they are in communication with Scotland Yard, and unless a proposal be made forthwith they will lay hands on you. How should my small charge of a thousand guineas keep you from letting me make them an offer. I can't put them off much longer. They have got an eye on Eldin, I am well

assured, and if he be taken he may split, you know. They uttered a threat against him in my presence only a minute ago."

"Let him split. But he won't. I know him better than that." "But they can prove nothing," said our old friend the "man with the squint," for it was no other than he who was seated in the Attorney's office.

"Don't they propose anything?"

"No; they are too cunning for that. Did you ever know a North countryman commit himself by a proposal? I tried to worm out what would satisfy them, but failed. You had better make a proposal yourself, or consult your confederates, and then let me know the result."

"I will do so," said Gray, and departed.

The delay, however, was becoming tiresome to the North countrymen, as the Jew attorney had styled them, and they resolved on another course to bring about a more speedy result. Having put themselves in communication with the authorities of Scotland Yard, they learned through the detective department that from inquiries among associates they had discovered that four crack London thieves had recently returned from Scotland loaded with a large amount of plunder. The detectives had ascertained their names, and knew where one of them could be found, and would lay hands on him if the Scotch bankers approved. After consultation as to what was the best course, Messrs Smith and Scott concluded to have

him arrested, and that very night Eldin—for it was no other than he—was captured and lodged in the prison at Hatton Garden. This decided step fairly outwitted the Attorney, who was delaying the business for his own ends, and caused him to bring the matter to a speedy bearing. The very next day he stated that he had received full authority to compromise, and an arrangement was entered into whereby the bankers were to get back £20,000 of the notes and the prosecution so far as the bank was concerned was to drop, the thieves being allowed to retain the balance of the spoil, which was about £14,000, less what they had spent. Of course such an arrangement as compromising with thieves could only be carried out in the most secret manner so that the active agents might not be discovered. After the bargain was completed it was therefore agreed that the notes to be given up should be handed into a cab on the following night at the corner of Aldermanbury postern; that there was only to be one person present on behalf of the bank; and that no inquiry was to be made at the individual who would bring the packages containing the notes as to his constituents. It was also agreed that one of the gentlemen representing the Greenock Bank should call the following day at Hatton Garden and state that there

was no charge against the person who had been taken up.

This arrangement was carried out to the letter, so far as the bankers were concerned.

A hackney coach drew up at the corner of Aldermanbury postern, immediately before that thoroughfare runs into Fore Street. It was dusk. The lamps had not been lit, yet the shadows of evening had so far advanced as to render the place misty and obscure. At any time this is a dull, gloomy, uninviting quarter, and at night it is particularly so. There was one gentleman in the carriage. The driver halted when he felt the check-string pulled, and he drew up his vehicle, as he was desired, close to the kerbstone. The sliding glass pane in the door of the coach was let down, but the door remained unopened and the inmate sat still. About a quarter of an hour elapsed after their arrival at this spot, when a man dressed like a common porter, with a large box slung on his back, came round the corner of London Wall. There was a person made his appearance almost at the same instant, but nearly opposite to him, on the other side of the street. The porter, if such he was, walked directly to the hackney coach, curtly saying to the gentleman inside, "This box is for you, sir."

"Yes; it is all right," slipping at the same time a gratuity into the man's hand. The box was handed in and laid on the front seat. Not another syllable was spoken. The porter disappeared one way, while the individual who was seen on the other side of the street walked rapidly away. A hint to the Jarvey and the coach drove away to Mr Parkes', of Park Lane.

The morning after the occurrence just

narrated, Mr Smith, one of the representatives of the Greenock Bank, called at the prison, Hatton Garden, and informed the keepers of that stronghold that the charge against the man who was in custody on suspicion of being an accomplice of the villains who had plundered the Scotch Bank was now withdrawn, and that he might be liberated. So far as the Bank was concerned, the matter was now hushed up, but the Lord Advocate, who in Scotland acts as the prosecutor in criminal cases in the public interest, was by no means satisfied with what had been done. He therefore instructed the London authorities to re-arrest the supposed delinquent and bring him to Glasgow to be tried at the Circuit Court of Justiciary.

The trial took place on Thursday, the 18th September, 1828, Lord Meadowbank being the presiding judge. Alexander Wood (afterwards Lord Wood) advocate-depute, appeared for the prosecution, and Francis Jeffrey and Earle Monteith appeared for the prisoner. The charge was as follows:—Henry Sanders or Saunders or Eldin, presently prisoner in the Tolbooth of Glasgow, you are accused at the instance of Sir William Rae of St Catherines, baronet, His Majesty's advocate for His Majesty's interest, that, albeit by the laws of this and

every well governed realm, theft, more especially by opening lockfast places, is a crime of a heinous nature and severely punishable. Yet true it is and of verity that you, the said Henry Sanders or Saunders or Eldin, did, with certain other persons, your accomplices, to the prosecutor unknown forcibly, and feloniously break into and enter the house or offices or premises situated in Cathcart Street, Greenock, occupied by the Greenock Banking Company, by opening the door of the said office by false keys, and did also open the money safe, and wickedly and feloniously steal therefrom £28,354 16s in notes of the Greenock Banking Company, besides notes belonging to other banks herein designed to the amount of £4,100 13s, and gold and silver to the amount of £1,661 15s 6d, and therefore you, the said Henry Sanders or Saunders or Eldin ought to be punished with the pains and penalties of the law to deter others from committing the like in all time coming.

As the punishment for such offences at that time was death, the prisoner's counsel, then among the first at the bar, exerted all their ingenuity to bring about an acquittal.

Mr Alexander Thomson, the manager of the bank, was examined, and proved as to finding the cash-box empty on that eventful Monday morning, the 10th March. He also



stated that Mr Charles Scott, one of the partners of the Bank, had brought a box from London containing notes to the amount of about £20,000.

Mr Alexander Brymner corroborated this evidence, as did Robert Love, the porter.

Mr Arthur Oughterson, teller, recollected of Mr Scott going to London. On the Monday night after he came back a box was brought to the bank. It was delivered to Mr Brymner, the cash keeper. There were about £20,000 of notes in the box, but could not say exactly.

Alexander Smith, merchant, Liverpool, knows that a box was sent from Liverpool to the Greenock Bank in the month of June. It contained notes to the amount of about £20,000. The notes were delivered to the witness by his father Mr William Smith, who was one of the partners in the bank. They were given to Mr Scott to take round in the steamer to Greenock.

Charles C. Scott, shipbuilder, went to London after robbery; met Mr Smith, of Liverpool, there. Went up to London to give information to police, but there was no money recovered through the medium of the police. The prisoner was taken into custody when witness was in London. He was afterwards liberated. There was money recovered. He did not recover it himself, his friends did

so. Among these were Mr Parkes, a merchant in Park Lane, and Mr William Smith, of Liverpool. Witness got box at Liverpool to bring to Greenock, but does not know of his own knowledge how much the contents amounted to.

William Brown Edwards, constable, London—Saw the prisoner in Hatton Garden. He was in custody. He was told by the people in Hatton Garden that the partner of the Greenock bank had called at the office and said that Saunders should be liberated, as there was no charge against him. He was liberated and afterwards apprehended on the present charge.

Mrs Wilson and Mrs Cosser identified the prisoner as being the Mr Eldin who lodged with the former, and as to his bathing habits and to hearing the filing of iron in the room he occupied along with the "Man with the Squint."

Witnesses proved the hiring of the gigs in Glasgow and their having been put up in Greenock on the Saturday previous to the robbery, and various Greenock witnesses spoke to the facts already mentioned in connection with their names. The carriage-hirer in the Gallowgate also proved the hiring of a post-chaise by the prisoner for Edinburgh, and said that there were three carpet bags put into it.

Succeeding witnesses were examined, by whom the robbers were traced from one stage to another until they reached London, but none of the witnesses had actually seen the prisoner in possession of the ill-gotten gains, and after a long proof the Advocate-Depute stated that he should decline to call further evidence.

There were no witnesses for the defence, and the Advocate-Depute having pointed out the suspicious circumstances connected with the movements of the prisoner at the time of the occurrence, asked the jury to return a verdict which, on their conscience, and under the strongly suspicious circumstance, they believed to be true.

Mr Jeffrey then addressed the Court for the defence. He did not wish to say much. He thought the case put by the Crown had broken down. Indeed, he did not see that any other result could follow on the evidence, the sum and substance of which was that the gentleman now at the bar left Greenock on a Sabbath morning in March, and that on that same morning a bank was robbed. If a person, whose business calls him to a town, were to be answerable for the delinquencies which are committed on the morning he takes his departure, he would like to know who would escape punishment. The prisoner had occasion to proceed to Glasgow the day

the bank was feloniously entered; there was nothing remarkable in that coincidence. No doubt he could adduce sufficient reasons for that, but as he is not bound to give those reasons, he has wisely kept them to himself. A man is not bound to prove himself innocent: he is held to be innocent until he has been proven guilty. He was never seen in the bank; he was never known to have the notes in his possession, and although he was seen with carpet bags in his possession that was natural enough in the case of a man who was travelling. It has not been shown that he was living luxuriously and spending freely as a man possessed of such money would be likely to do, and it seems to me as if there was a huge mistake in apprehending him at all. My client will be acquitted I am confident. The form of verdict may possibly give rise to debate, but if he is acquitted I do not place much stress on the form of the verdict.

Lord Meadowbank, in summing up, said that after the long and patient investigation in this case it would not be proper to detain them longer after the turn the evidence had taken. It was, however, impossible to doubt that circumstances of great and pregnant suspicion attached to the prisoner at the bar. There was scarcely a witness examined whose testimony did not tend to add to that

suspicion. But no jury was entitled to convict merely on suspicion. If there was a doubt the prisoner was entitled to the benefit of it. The public prosecutor, looking at the suspicious circumstances, had acted wisely in bringing forward the charge, and if the evidence failed to bring home the charge to the prisoner it exposed much of the practices of those who plan and perpetrate such crimes, and may lead to very important consequences. The jury, having consulted, returned a verdict of "not proven."

In pronouncing sentence his Lordship said:—"Henry Saunders, the jury have given you the benefit of a verdict of not proven. You have already heard that a verdict in these terms attaches strong and lasting suspicion to an individual. Your own conscience will tell you whether you deserve it or not, but I must tell you that if you value your own peace, if you value your own safety, never place yourself in circumstances by which you may be brought to appear again at a bar of this description, as, should you ever be found there, the verdict which has just been delivered will attach to you. You are dismissed."

With this trial the story of the Greenock Bank robbery is brought to a close, and also the first volume of these historical sketches.



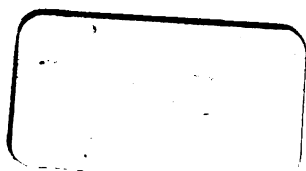
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